

RANDOLPH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

629 Industrial Park Avenue

Asheboro, North Carolina

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM

November 2022

General

In the Respiratory Protection program, hazard assessment and selection of proper respiratory PPE are conducted in the same manner as for other types of PPE. In the control of those occupational diseases caused by breathing air contaminated with harmful dusts, fogs, fumes, mists, gases, smokes, sprays, or vapors, the primary objective shall be to prevent atmospheric contamination. This shall be accomplished as far as feasible by accepted engineering control measures (for example, enclosure or confinement of the operation, general and local ventilation, and substitution of less toxic materials). When effective engineering controls are not feasible, or while they are being instituted, appropriate respirators shall be used. References: OSHA Standards *Respiratory Protection* (29 CFR 1910.134)

All affected employees shall follow the requirements of the Respiratory Protection Program.

Program Administrator

The Director of Safety & Emergency Preparedness will be designated as the program administrator, and will work with the College Department Heads to develop, implement, and audit specific protocols and procedures for the department that must utilize respirators.

Program Evaluation

Evaluations of the workplace are necessary to ensure that the written respiratory protection program is being properly implemented. This includes consulting with employees to ensure that they are using the respirators properly. Evaluations shall be conducted as necessary to ensure that the provisions of the current written program are being effectively implemented and that it continues to be effective.

Program evaluation will include discussions with employees required to use respirators to assess the employees' views on program effectiveness and to identify any problems. Any problems that are identified during this assessment shall be corrected. Factors to be assessed include, but are not limited to:

- Respirator fit (including the ability to use the respirator without interfering with effective workplace performance);
- Appropriate respirator selection for the hazards to which the employee is exposed;
- Proper respirator use under the workplace conditions the employee encounters; and
- Proper respirator maintenance.

Record Keeping

The Director of Human Resources will retain written information regarding medical evaluations. The Director of Safety & Emergency Preparedness will retain the written information on fit testing and the respirator program. This information will facilitate employee involvement in the respirator program, assist the college in auditing the adequacy of the program, and provide a record for compliance.

Training and Information

Effective training for employees who are required to use respirators is essential. The training must be comprehensive, understandable, and recur annually and more often if necessary. Training will be provided prior to requiring the employee to use a respirator in the workplace. The training shall ensure that each employee can demonstrate knowledge of at least the following:

- Why the respirator is necessary and how improper fit, usage, or maintenance can compromise the protective effect of the respirator;
- Limitations and capabilities of the respirator;
- How to use the respirator effectively in emergency situations, including situations in which the respirator malfunctions;
- How to inspect, put on and remove, use, and check the seals of the respirator;
- What the procedures are for maintenance and storage of the respirator;
- How to recognize medical signs and symptoms that may limit or prevent the effective use of respirators; and
- The general requirements of this program.

Retraining shall be conducted annually and when:

- Changes in the workplace or the type of respirator render previous training obsolete;
- Inadequacies in the employee's knowledge or use of the respirator indicate that the employee has not retained the requisite understanding or skill; and
- Other situation arises in which retraining appears necessary to ensure safe respirator use.

Training will be conducted by instructors who have adequate knowledge of OSHA training requirements. Training is divided into the following sections:

Classroom Instruction

1. Overview of the College Respiratory Protection Program & OSHA Standard;
2. Respiratory Protection Safety Procedures;
3. Respirator Selection;
4. Respirator Operation and Use;
5. Why the respirator is necessary;
6. How improper fit, usage, or maintenance can compromise the protective effect;
7. Limitations and capabilities of the respirator;
8. How to use the respirator effectively in emergency situations, including respirator malfunctions;
9. How to inspect, put on and remove, use, and check the seals of the respirator;
10. What the procedures are for maintenance and storage of the respirator;
11. How to recognize medical signs and symptoms that may limit or prevent the effective use of respirators; and
12. Change out schedule and procedure for air purifying respirators (APR).

Fit Testing

- For each type and model of respirator used.

Hands-on Respirator Training

1. Respirator Inspection;
2. Respirator cleaning and sanitizing;
3. Record Keeping;
4. Respirator Storage;
5. Respirator Fit Check; and
6. Emergencies.

Basic Respiratory Protection Safety Procedures

1. Only authorized and trained employees may use respirators. Those employees may use only the respirator that they have been trained on and properly fitted to use.
2. Only physically qualified employees may be trained and authorized to use respirators. A pre-authorization and annual certification by a qualified physician will be required and maintained. Any changes in an employee's health or physical characteristics will be reported to the program administrator and will be evaluated by a qualified physician.
3. Only the proper prescribed respirator or SCBA may be used for the job or work environment.
4. Only SCBAs will be used in oxygen deficient environments, environments with an unknown hazardous substance or unknown quantity of a known hazardous substance, or any environment that is determined "Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health" (IDLH).
5. All respirators will be located in a clean, convenient and sanitary location.
6. Management will establish and maintain safe operation procedures for the safe use of RPE with strict enforcement and disciplinary action for failure to follow all general and specific safety rules. Standard Operation Procedures for General RPE use will be maintained as an attachment to the Respiratory Protection Program and Standard Operation Procedures for RPE use under emergency response situations will be maintained as an attachment to the Emergency Response Program.

Selection of Respirators

All selected respirators shall be NIOSH certified, and approved by either the Director of Safety and Emergency Preparedness or the Department Head of the College program using the respirator.

Filter Classifications - These classifications are marked on the filter or filter package.

N-Series: Not Oil Resistant

- Approved for non-oil particulate contaminants
- Examples: dust, fumes, mists not containing oil

R-Series: Oil Resistant

- Approved for all particulate contaminants, including those containing oil
- Examples: dusts, mists, fumes
- Time restriction of 8 hours when oils are present

P-Series: Oil Proof

- Approved for all particulate contaminants including those containing oil
- Examples: dust, fumes, mists
- See Manufacturer's time use restrictions on packaging

Identification of Filters & Cartridges

All filters and cartridges shall be labeled and color coded with the NIOSH approval label. The user shall ensure that the label is not removed and remains legible. A change out schedule for filters and cartridge has been developed to ensure these elements of the respirators remain effective.

Air contaminants, estimates of exposure and respirators to be used

Location of Contaminant	Type of Contaminant	Duration of Exposure	Type of Respirator
ESTC Burn Building	Class A	30 min per use	Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
ESTC Burn Simulator	Class A	30 min per use	Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
ESTC LP Gas Props	LP Gas	30 min per use	Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
ESTC Confined Space Pit	Class A	30 min per use	Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
RPEC 117	Liquid spray/ Mist Vapor	2.5hrs week	Duel cartridge 3M5000 series

Respirator Filter & Canister Replacement

An important part of the Respiratory Protection Program includes identifying the useful life of cartridges and filters used on air-purifying respirators. Each filter and cartridge shall be equipped with an end-of-service-life indicator (ESLI) certified by NIOSH for the contaminant; or if there is no ESLI appropriate for the conditions, a change schedule for canisters and cartridges based on objective information or data that will ensure that canisters and cartridges are changed before the end of their service life shall be implemented.

Filter & Cartridge Change Schedule

Stock of spare filters and cartridges shall be maintained to allow immediate change when required or desired by the employee.

Cartridges shall be changed based on the most limiting factor below:

- Prior to expiration date;
- Manufacture's recommendations for the specific use and environment;
- After each use;
- When requested by employee;
- When contaminant odor is detected; and
- When restriction to air flow has occurred as evidenced by increased effort by user to breathe normally.

Cartridges shall remain in their original sealed packages until needed for immediate use.

Filters shall be changed on the most limiting factor below:

- Prior to expiration date;
- Manufacture's recommendations for the specific use and environment;
- When requested by employee;
- When contaminant odor is detected;
- When restriction to air flow has occurred as evidenced by increased effort by user to breathe normally; and
- When discoloring of the filter media is evident.

Filters shall remain in their original sealed package until needed for immediate use.

Voluntary Use of Respirators

OSHA requires that the voluntary use of respirators (i.e., when respirators are not required by the company) be controlled as strictly as if their use were required. So, any employee wearing a respirator voluntarily shall fall under this respiratory protection program. Exception: Employees whose only use of respirators involves the voluntary use of filtering (non-sealing) face pieces (dust masks, with one OR two straps) do not fall under this program.

Physical and Medical Qualifications

Medical evaluations must be retained and made available in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.1020.

Medical evaluation required

Using a respirator may place a physiological burden on employees that varies with the type of respirator worn, the job and workplace conditions in which the respirator is used, and the medical status of the employee. The college provides a medical evaluation to determine the employee's ability to use a respirator, before the employee is fit tested or required to use the respirator in the workplace. The employee will be provided a medical questionnaire by the designated Occupational Health Care Provider.

Follow-up medical examination

The college shall ensure that a follow-up medical examination is provided for an employee who gives a positive response to any question among questions in Part B of the questionnaire or whose initial medical examination demonstrates the need for a follow-up medical examination. The follow-up medical examination shall include any medical tests, consultations, or diagnostic procedures that the physician deems necessary to make a final determination.

Administration of the medical questionnaire and examinations

The medical questionnaire and examinations shall be administered confidentially during the employee's normal working hours or at a time and place convenient to the employee. The medical questionnaire shall be administered in a manner that ensures that the employee understands its content. The college shall provide the employee with an opportunity to discuss the questionnaire and examination results with the physician. The following information must be provided to the physician before the physician makes a recommendation concerning an employee's ability to use a respirator:

- The type and weight of the respirator to be used by the employee;
- The duration and frequency of respirator use (including use for rescue and escape);
- The expected physical work effort;
- Additional protective clothing and equipment to be worn;
- Temperature and humidity extremes that may be encountered; and
- Any supplemental information provided previously to the physician regarding an employee need not be provided for a subsequent medical evaluation if the information and the physician remain the same.

Medical determination

In determining the employee's ability to use a respirator, the college shall obtain a written recommendation regarding the employee's ability to use the respirator from the physician. The recommendation shall provide only the following information:

- Any limitations on respirator use related to the medical condition of the employee, or relating to the workplace conditions in which the respirator will be used, including whether or not the employee is medically able to use the respirator;
- The need, if any, for follow-up medical evaluations;
- A statement that the physician has provided the employee with a copy of the physician's written recommendation.

Additional Medical Evaluations

At a minimum, the college shall provide additional medical evaluations that comply with the requirements of this section if:

- An employee reports medical signs or symptoms that are related to ability to use a respirator;
- A physician, supervisor, or the respirator program administrator informs the college that an employee needs to be reevaluated;
- Information from the respiratory protection program, including observations made during fit testing and program evaluation, indicates a need for employee reevaluation; and
- A change occurs in workplace conditions (physical work effort, protective clothing, temperature, etc.) that may result in a substantial increase in the physiological burden placed on an employee.

Respirator Fit Testing

Before an employee is required to use any respirator with a negative or positive pressure tight-fitting face piece, the employee must be fit tested with the same make, model, style, and size of respirator that will be used. The college shall ensure that an employee using a tight-fitting face piece respirator is fit tested prior to initial use of the respirator, whenever a different respirator face piece (size, style, model or make) is used, and at least annually thereafter.

The college has established a record of the qualitative and quantitative fit tests administered to employees including:

- The name or identification of the employee tested;
- Type of fit test performed;
- Specific make, model, style, and size of respirator tested;
- Date of test; and
- The pass/fail results for QLFTs or the fit factor and strip chart recording or other recording of the test results for QNFTs.

Additional fit tests will be conducted whenever the employee reports, or the college, physician, supervisor, or program administrator makes visual observations of, changes in the employee's physical condition that could affect respirator fit. Such conditions include, but are not limited to, facial scarring, dental changes, cosmetic surgery, or an obvious change in body weight. If after passing a QLFT or QNFT, the employee notifies the college, program administrator, supervisor, or physician that the fit of the respirator is unacceptable, the employee shall be given a reasonable opportunity to select a different respirator face piece and to be retested.

Types of Fit Tests

The fit test shall be administered using an OSHA-accepted QLFT or QNFT protocol. The OSHA-accepted QLFT and QNFT protocols and procedures are contained in Appendix A of OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.134.

- **QLFT** may only be used to fit test negative pressure air-purifying respirators that must achieve a fit factor of 100 or less.
- If the fit factor, as determined through an OSHA-accepted QNFT protocol, is equal to or greater than 100 for tight-fitting half face pieces, or equal to or greater than 500 for tight-fitting full face pieces, the QNFT has been passed with that respirator.
- **Fit testing of tight-fitting** atmosphere-supplying respirators and tight-fitting powered air-purifying respirators shall be accomplished by performing quantitative or qualitative fit testing in the negative pressure mode, regardless of the mode of operation (negative or positive pressure) that is used for respiratory protection.
- **Qualitative fit testing** of these respirators shall be accomplished by temporarily converting the respirator user's actual face piece into a negative pressure respirator with appropriate filters, or by using an identical negative pressure air-purifying respirator face piece with the same sealing surfaces as a surrogate for the atmosphere-supplying or powered air-purifying respirator face piece.
- **Quantitative fit testing** of these respirators shall be accomplished by modifying the face piece to allow sampling inside the face piece in the breathing zone of the user, midway between the nose and mouth. This requirement shall be accomplished by installing a permanent sampling probe onto a surrogate face piece, or by using a sampling adapter designed to temporarily provide a means of sampling air from inside the face piece.
- Any modifications to the respirator face piece for fit testing shall be completely removed, and the face piece restored to NIOSH approved configuration, before that face piece can be used in the workplace.

Fit test records shall be retained for respirator users until the next fit test is administered. Written materials required to be retained shall be made available upon request to affected employees.

Respirator Inspection

All respirators/SCBAs will be inspected after each use and at least monthly. Should any defects be noted, the respirator/SCBA will be taken to the Department Head. Damaged respirators will be repaired or replaced. All respirators used in routine situations shall be inspected before each use and during cleaning.

Respirator inspections include the following:

- A check of respirator function, tightness of connections, and the condition of the various parts including, but not limited to, the face piece, head straps, valves, connecting tube, and cartridges, canisters or filters;
- Check of elastomeric parts for pliability and signs of deterioration; and
- Self-contained breathing apparatus shall be inspected monthly.

Respirator Operation and Use

Respirators will only be used following the respiratory protection safety procedures established in this program. The Operations and Use Manuals for each type of respirator will be maintained by the Department Head and be available to all qualified users. Surveillance by the direct supervisor shall be maintained of work area conditions and degree of employee exposure or stress. When there is a change in work area conditions or degree of employee exposure or stress that may affect respirator effectiveness, the college shall reevaluate the continued effectiveness of the respirator.

For continued protection of respirator users, the following general use rules apply:

- Users shall not remove respirators while in a hazardous environment;
- Respirators are to be stored in sealed containers out of harmful atmospheres;
- Store respirators away from heat and moisture;
- Store respirators such that the sealing area does not become distorted or warped; and
- Store respirator such that the face piece is protected.

Face piece seal protection

The college does not permit respirators with tight-fitting face pieces to be worn by employees who have:

- Facial hair that comes between the sealing surface of the face piece and the face or that interferes with valve function; and/or
- Any condition that interferes with the face-to-face piece seal or valve function.

If an employee wears corrective glasses or goggles or other personal protective equipment, the college shall ensure that such equipment is worn in a manner that does not interfere with the seal of the face piece to the face of the user.

Continuing Effectiveness of Respirators

The college shall ensure that employees leave the respirator use area:

- To wash their faces and respirator face pieces as necessary to prevent eye or skin irritation associated with respirator use;
- If they detect vapor or gas breakthrough, changes in breathing resistance, or leakage of the face piece; and
- To replace the respirator or the filter, cartridge, or canister elements.

If the employee detects vapor or gas breakthrough, changes in breathing resistance, or leakage of the face piece, the college will replace or repair the respirator before allowing the employee to return to the work area.

Cleaning, Disinfecting and Storage

The college shall provide each respirator user with a respirator that is clean, sanitary, and in good working order. Employees are responsible for cleaning and proper storage of respirators assigned to them. Each Department shall ensure that respirators are cleaned and disinfected when:

- Respirators issued for the exclusive use of an employee shall be cleaned and disinfected as often as necessary to be maintained in a sanitary condition;
- Respirators issued to more than one employee shall be cleaned and disinfected before being worn by different individuals;
- Respirators maintained for emergency use shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use; and
- Respirators used in fit testing and training shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- All respirators shall be stored to protect them from damage, contamination, dust, sunlight, extreme temperatures, excessive moisture, and damaging chemicals, and they shall be packed or stored to prevent deformation of the face piece and exhalation valve.

Repair of Respirators

Respirators that fail an inspection or are otherwise found to be defective will be removed from service to be discarded, repaired or adjusted in accordance with the following procedures:

- Repairs or adjustments to respirators are to be made only by persons appropriately trained to perform such operations and shall use only the respirator manufacturer's NIOSH-approved parts designed for the respirator;
- Repairs shall be made according to the manufacturer's recommendations and specifications for the type and extent of repairs to be performed.