

Safety Tips

Respiratory Protection

1. Sometimes the air where you work contains hazardous contaminants or doesn't have enough oxygen. The OSHA term for these conditions is IDLH: "immediately dangerous to life and health."
2. If these problems can't be solved with mechanical ventilation, you must wear a respirator.
3. The three main types are supplied-air respirators, which provide pressurized breathing air; self-contained units that have air in a tank that you carry on your back; and air-purifying respirators, the use filters to clean the air you breathe.
4. Respirators must always be fit-tested to make sure they seal correctly to your face, and that there are no leaks.
5. Each time you use your respirator, check to make sure that all connections are tight; that it is in good condition and hasn't been damaged; that it seals correctly on your face; and that the filters haven't exceeded their useful life.
6. Learn how to perform both a negative-pressure check and a positive-pressure check on your respirator.
7. Escape respirators are only for emergencies; don't use them during normal work.
8. Respirator maintenance is a critical part of any respiratory protection program. Users must know how to:
 - remove and replace filters, cartridges and canisters
 - disassemble and reassemble the respirator
 - recognize, discard and replace broken parts
 - clean and disinfect dirty respirators
 - store a respirator to keep it clean and protect it from damage and contamination.