

**Subchapter 7. General Industry Safety Orders**  
**Group 16. Control of Hazardous Substances**  
**Article 107. Dusts, Fumes, Mists, Vapors and Gases**

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**§5144. Respiratory Protection.**

Guide to Respiratory Protection at Work

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(a) Permissible practice.

(1) 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 pursuant to this section.

(2) Respirators shall be provided by the employer when such equipment is necessary to protect the health of the employee. The employer shall provide the respirators which are applicable and suitable for the purpose intended. The employer shall be responsible for the establishment and maintenance of a respiratory protection program which shall include the requirements outlined in subsection (c).

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(c) Respiratory protection program. This subsection requires the employer to develop and implement a written respiratory protection program with required worksite-specific procedures and elements for required respirator use. The program must be administered by a suitably trained program administrator. In addition, certain program elements may be required for voluntary use to prevent potential hazards associated with the use of the respirator. The Small Entity Compliance Guide contains criteria for the selection of a program administrator and a sample program that meets the requirements of this subsection. Copies of the Small Entity Compliance Guide will be available from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Office of Publications, Room N 3101, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, 20210 (202-219-4667).

(1) In any workplace where respirators are necessary to protect the health of the employee or whenever respirators are required by the employer, the employer shall establish and implement a written respiratory protection program with worksite-specific procedures. The program shall be updated as necessary to reflect those changes in workplace conditions that affect respirator use. The employer shall include in the program the following provisions, as applicable:

## ATTACHMENT A

- (A) Procedures for selecting respirators for use in the workplace;
- (B) Medical evaluations of employees required to use respirators;
- (C) Fit testing procedures for tight-fitting respirators;
- (D) Procedures for proper use of respirators in routine and reasonably foreseeable emergency situations;
- (E) Procedures and schedules for cleaning, disinfecting, storing, inspecting, repairing, discarding, and otherwise maintaining respirators;
- (F) Procedures to ensure adequate air quality, quantity, and flow of breathing air for atmosphere-supplying respirators;
- (G) Training of employees in the respiratory hazards to which they are potentially exposed during routine and emergency situations;
- (H) Training of employees in the proper use of respirators, including putting on and removing them, any limitations on their use, and their maintenance; and
- (I) Procedures for regularly evaluating the effectiveness of the program.