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POLICY

The Respiratory Protection Program for the Institution is developed by the Department of Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) to ensure that employees will be adequately protected in situations where engineering controls have been determined to be inadequate, during repair or implementation of engineering controls, or in emergency situations.

The Respiratory Protection Program shall be directed and administered by the Environmental Health Officer of HSE.

For information about Respiratory Protection Devices see [HSE 008 – A](#).

REFERENCES

29CFR1910.134, 139 and 1000

RESPONSIBILITIES

Executive Director of Health, Safety and Environment	Determination of medical fitness of staff on the respiratory protection program.
Environmental Health Officer	Administer the Respiratory Protection Program. Approve respiratory protection to be utilized. Review worksite evaluations to determine proper respiratory protection for individuals evaluated.
Biosafety Officer	Evaluation of all issues of a biohazardous nature. Report recommendations on respirator protection to the EHO for inclusion into the Program.
Department of Health, Safety and Environment	Conduct worksite evaluation to determine staff exposure to airborne contaminants. Conduct training on Respiratory Protection Program. Fit testing of all individuals on the Respiratory Protection Program. Recommend appropriate respiratory protection for individuals to the Environmental Health Officer.
Occupational Health Services	Medical surveillance of staff on Respiratory Protection Program.
Supervisors	Request evaluation of hazards identified in the worksite. Assure compliance of their staff with the Respiratory Protection Program.
Staff	Comply with the Respiratory Protection Program and proper procedures for wearing respiratory protection.

GUIDELINES

1. Selection of respirators will be based upon evaluation of potential exposures in the workplace. Procedures for monitoring exposures in the work place will be directed by the Respiratory Protection Program administrator who will determine the need for respiratory protection based upon monitoring of the work site and comparing the results of this monitoring to published recognized standards.
2. Medical evaluations of employees required to use respirators will be done under the auspices of Occupational Health Services or the Center for Occupational and Environmental Health and will use the forms and questionnaire included in this program.

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3. Approval that an individual meets the criteria to wear respiratory protection is under the auspices of the Executive Director of Health, Safety and Environment.
4. In order to ensure compliance of all faculty, staff and student who must use respiratory protection, the respiratory protection program administrator must approve all training programs. The training shall comply with 29CFR1910.134 and the requirements of this program.
5. All individuals wearing tight-fitting respirators shall be fit tested to determine the effectiveness of the face shield and protection afforded by selected respirator.
6. Regular evaluation of the program and respirator use will be conducted.
7. Individuals desiring to use respiratory protection even though there is no documented over-exposure to any of the published or recognized hazards must present their rationale in writing to the Executive Director of Health, Safety and Environment for consideration and approval.
8. Faculty, staff and students who feel that they are being over-exposed to hazardous materials in their work place should request through their supervisor or faculty member monitoring of the workplace by Health, Safety and Environment.

PROCEDURE FOR WORK PLACE EVALUATION

1. The supervisor or principal investigator must make a request in writing to the Environmental Health Officer to conduct monitoring of the work area to determine the level to which individuals are exposed.
 - a. This request must include a list of chemicals to which it is suspected that the employees are exposed.
 - b. The amount of chemicals used on a routine basis.
 - c. Any protection that is currently being used.
 - d. Name of all individuals who are potentially exposed.
 - e. The work shift and location of those individuals for whom monitoring is being requested.
2. Upon receipt of such written request, the Environmental Health Officer will schedule monitoring by an Industrial Hygienist to determine exposure levels.
3. Based upon the results of such monitoring, the Environmental Health Officer will make a determination of whether respiratory protection is required and what protection would be appropriate based upon published standards.
4. The Environmental Health Officer will generate a report of his findings to assure worker safety. The findings will be forwarded to the supervisor with recommended actions. Copies will be sent to the Chair of the Joint Committee for Health, Safety and Environment and to Occupational Health Services.
5. Upon receipt of the results, the supervisor shall inform affected staff and shall contact the Environmental Health Officer to schedule a meeting with staff to explain the results of the monitoring and the appropriate steps to be taken.
6. At the time of the meeting, the staff will be given a medical evaluation questionnaire to be completed and forwarded to the Occupational Health Services.
7. Occupational Health Services upon receipt of the completed questionnaire will schedule medical evaluation of affected staff members. Occupational Health Services will use the criteria set forth in 29CFR1910.134 Appendix C as part of the medical evaluation. The results of this evaluation will be subject to review and approval by the Executive Director of HSE.
8. Results of the examination conducted by Occupational Health Services will be forwarded to the Environmental Health Officer.
9. Upon receipt of notification of an individual's medical approval to wear respiratory protection, Health, Safety and Environment will schedule the individual for an approved training class, respirator selection, and fit testing.

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RESPIRATORY SELECTION AND USES

1. Respirators selected for use within the Johns Hopkins Hospital and University must be currently certified by NIOSH and so listed.
2. Respirators will be used only in compliance with condition of the NIOSH certification. Any use of respirators beyond the stated conditions of certification will be contrary to this program.
3. Respirators will be selected by the Environmental Health Officer based upon an evaluation of respiratory hazards in the workplace. This evaluation shall include reasonable estimate of employee exposure and identification of chemical contaminants.
4. All atmospheres in which the oxygen level is considered deficient shall be considered as immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH).
5. The Environmental Health Officer shall designate an appropriate schedule for changing canister or cartridges for respirators and that schedule shall be based upon current published and recognized standards.
6. Certain situations require the individual to use escape masks because of the immediate hazards associated with the material being used. The need to use escape masks will be determined on a case by case evaluation by the EHO. The approval will be restricted to the time period and conditions set by the EHO.

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION TRAINING

The purpose of the respiratory training is to ensure that the individual who must wear a respirator receives adequate training to know the limitations and use of respiratory protection, and the proper procedures for donning, cleaning, inspecting and wearing assigned respirators.

Outline

1. The respiratory hazards in the workplace
2. Permissible exposure limits to airborne hazards in the workplace
3. Types of respiratory protection
4. Uses of respiratory protection
5. Limits of respiratory protection
6. Inspection of respirators
7. Respirator selection and fitting the respirator
8. Donning the respirator
9. Fit check/seal check procedures (Appendix B-1 29CFR1910.134)
10. Fit testing

Fit testing procedures shall be in compliance with Appendix A to 29CFR1910.134. Fit testing of all negative pressure respirators will be conducted in accordance with this Appendix. Fit testing of all tight fitting powered air purifying and self contained respirators will be fit tested in a negative pressure mode in accordance with these procedures. The proper procedure to wear and use loose fitting respirators will be demonstrated; however, due to the inability of these units to work in negative pressure mode, fit testing is not required.

HSE will conduct quantitative fit-testing using a PortaCount unit.

11. Removal and cleaning of respirators (Appendix B-2 29CFR1910.134)
12. Proper storage of respirators

EXEMPTIONS

Individuals who choose to use respiratory protection even though it is not warranted by exposure monitoring.

Individuals who choose for their own personal preference to wear respiratory protection must comply with all aspects of 29 CFR 1910.133 Appendix D. Additionally, they must request permission from the Executive Director of Health, Safety & Environment and the Chair of the Joint Committee for Health, Safety and Environment. Copies of this letter are to be forwarded to their supervisor, Occupational Health Services and the Environmental Health

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Officer. If approval is given, the individual must bear all costs associated with medical monitoring, respiratory selection, and fit testing. HSE will provide the appropriate training to approved individuals.

Facial Hair and Individuals who are precluded from shaving

In order to ensure proper fit of respirator protection, individuals requiring respiratory protection are not permitted to grow facial hair that may interfere with the seat of the respirator.

Individuals who cannot be clean shaven due to documented medical conditions or documented religious restrictions are allowed to select a loose fitting powered air purifying respirator if their work does not require entry into areas deemed as IDLH. In order to be granted this exception, documentation must be provided to the Executive Director of Health, Safety and Environment.

ADDENDUMS

[HSE 008 – A: Respiratory Protection Devices](#)

REVIEW CYCLE

Every three years.