

## **University of Tennessee @ Chattanooga Respiratory Protection Program**

OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.134

Effective date: 3/1/2012

Areas Affected: Employees whose duties require the use of a respirator

### **Introduction:**

The primary objective is to prevent harmful exposure to airborne contaminants. Where feasible, this shall be accomplished through engineering controls. For example: enclosure, isolation, general or local ventilation and substitution of less toxic materials. The use of appropriate respiratory protection will be required when effective engineering controls and / or administrative controls are not feasible as well as while they are being instituted or evaluated.

### **Scope:**

This program shall apply to all respirators used by UTC employees for the purposes of protection from airborne hazards. The program shall not apply to respiratory equipment used for comfort or to prevent exposure to nuisance levels of air contaminants. This program will be overseen by the UTC Office of Safety & Risk Management.

### **Responsibilities:**

1. UTC Safety & Risk Management
  - a. Establish and maintain the Respiratory Protection Program.
  - b. Ensure that respirators are selected from those approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and that they have been tested and certified for a particular hazard.
  - c. Provide respirators for employee use when such equipment is necessary to protect the health of the individual.
  - d. Provide respirators that are suitable for the hazard.

- e. Provide instruction and training in the proper use , putting on and removal as well as any limitation of respirators
- f. Ensure that training and fit testing is provided prior to requiring the employee to use the respirator.
- g. Perform appropriate surveillance of work area conditions to ensure the program is properly implemented and employees are using respirators appropriately.
- h. Conduct an annual evaluation of program effectiveness.
- i. Assist departments with their respiratory protection program needs.
- j. Record keeping.

2. Department Supervisors:

- a. Ensure that employees are not assigned tasks requiring the use of respirators unless it has been determined that the employee has received proper fit testing and training.
- b. Notify the Office of Safety and Risk Management when new employees are hired and assigned duties that require respiratory protection.
- c. Notify the Office of Safety & Risk Management of any defective equipment or any changes in an employee's physical ability to properly use a respirator.

3. Each UTC Employee is responsible for:

- a. Using provided respiratory protection in accordance with the UTC respiratory protection program.
- b. Attending required training and fit testing.
- c. Immediately reporting any malfunction of the respirator to their supervisor.
- d. Notifying their supervisor when a change in their health status occurs that could affect their ability to use a respirator.

### **Medical Evaluation:**

**Medical evaluation questionnaires and physician appointments will be coordinated through the Office of Safety & Risk Management.**

1. All employees will complete an OSHA Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire before using a respirator. The questionnaire will be submitted to a physician or health care provider for evaluation. Pass/Fail information will be entered with records kept by the UTC Office of Safety & Risk Management.
2. Follow up medical evaluations shall be provided at no expense to the employee when a change in the employee's health is noted. The employee or their supervisor may request a follow up medical evaluation through the UTC Office of Safety & Risk Management.

### **Respirator Selection:**

**All respirators and cartridges will be purchased by the Office of Safety & Risk Management and will be given to the supervisors. Transfer vouchers will be completed and sent to the requesting department.**

1. Only NIOSH approved respirators will be used in this program.
2. The choice of respirators will be dependent upon the following information:
  - a. The airborne contaminants and concentration present.
  - b. The physical, chemical, and toxicological properties of the contaminants.
  - c. Odor threshold data (warning properties).
  - d. Applicable exposure limits
  - e. Eye irritation potential
  - f. Service life information available on cartridges or canisters.

## **Fitting of Respirators:**

1. Requirements for Fit Testing
  - a. Fit testing shall occur annually
  - b. Additional fit testing may be required whenever an employee reports or the employer observes changes in the employee's physical condition that could affect the respirator fit i.e. facial scarring, dental changes, cosmetic surgery, and obvious changes in body weight, etc..
  - c. Fit testing must be conducted using an OSHA accepted protocol.
  - d. Employees with facial hair that interferes with the seal of the respirator will be requested to remove the interfering facial hair or sign a waiver stating that they declined to be fit tested. Declining fit testing will result in the employee not being able to perform job duties.
  
2. Single Use Respirators (N-95):
  - a. Single use respirators (dust masks) will be available in the area when needed. Such masks must be labeled for the use intended.
  - b. Masks shall be discarded at the end of each shift.
  - c. Visibly soiled or contaminated masks will be discarded immediately after use.

### 3. Proper Fitting of Respirators

Proper fitting of respirators is essential if employees are to receive the protection for which the program is designed.

In order to receive a good face seal, the following rules shall be observed:

- a. Inspection for defects (including a leak check).
- b. Cleaning and disinfecting.

- c. All respirators shall be inspected monthly as well as before and after each use. Inspection documentation will be maintained by each department.
- d. Respirator inspection shall include a check of the tightness of connections and the conditions of the face piece, headbands, valves, connecting tube, and cartridges or canisters. Rubber or elastomer parts shall be inspected for pliability and signs of deterioration.
- e. Only factory authorized persons shall do replacement or repairs with parts from the manufacturer designed for the respirator.
- f. After inspection, cleaning, and necessary repair, respirators shall be stored to protect against dust, sunlight, heat, extreme cold, excessive moisture, theft, physical damage or damaging chemicals. Cleaned respirators will be stored in a clean plastic bag and kept in a designated department location. When storing a respirator, the face piece and exhalation valve must be in a normal position to prevent the abnormal set of elastomer parts during storage.

**Evaluation of Program Effectiveness:**

- 1 Observation of employee activities throughout the facility will be conducted to confirm proper respirator use is enforced.
- 2 The overall effectiveness of the respirator program will be evaluated as necessary by the Office of Safety & Risk Management with actions taken to correct any defects found in the program.

**Employee Training:**

1. Each employee assigned to an area requiring the use of a respirator will be trained on proper respirator usage by the Office of Safety and Risk Management.
2. Each employee will be trained why the respirator is necessary and on the limitations of the individual respirator.

3. Employees required to wear respirators will be instructed to immediately leave a contaminated area upon suspicion of respirator failure.
4. A record shall be kept of training and fit testing.

<b>RECORD</b>	<b>Location where record is filed</b>	<b>Length of record retention</b>
Medical Evaluation	Safety & Risk Management Office	40 years
Air Monitoring Results	Safety & Risk Management Office	40 years
MSDS	Department	40 years
Respirator fit testing, Brand, Size	Safety & Risk Management Office	3 years
Employee Training	Department	3 years

**Standards:**

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