

Respiratory Protection Program

The purpose of a respiratory program is the control of atmospheric contamination that is found in the work environment. This should be accomplished, as much as possible, using engineering controls such as the enclosure or confinement of an operation, sufficient ventilation of an operation, and/or substitution of materials which are less harmful to workers. In cases where these controls are not feasible, or during the installation of these types of controls, or when specific types of clean-up activities are required, the use of respiratory protective equipment is necessary.

Each county should develop a program to assure that each of their employees receives proper instruction, adequate supervision, and provision of equipment necessary for safe working conditions. Recommended policies, guidelines, and procedures can be found in the CTSI Loss Prevention Manual and are based on the OSHA Respiratory Protection regulation, 29 CFR 1910.134.

The basic elements of a county Respiratory Protection Program should include:

1. Identification of hazards in the work place.
2. A written respiratory protection program and maintenance of an accessible library for manufacturers' instructions and other pertinent information.
3. Selection of proper respiratory protection equipment for the task.
4. Training of each employee in the procedure relative to:
 - a. Selection
 - b. Use
 - c. Fitting

- d. Fit testing
- e. Incompatibility or Exposure
- f. Maintenance and care
 - i. Cleaning
 - ii. Disinfecting
 - iii. Preventive maintenance
 - iv. Defect detection
 - v. Referral for repair or replacement
- g. Respirator service life
- h. Evaluation
- I. Recordkeeping

5. Provision of a clean, sanitary location for respirator storage between shifts and assurance that each worker has his/her own device.
6. Adoption of a schedule of regular inspections.

Good fit is the key once you have made your selection for respiratory protection. The mask will not be effective if a good seal is not obtained. Ask for help if you are not sure of the fit or any others parts about the program.

For complete information and training, counties should refer to the CTSI Loss Prevention Manual available at www.ctsi.org, Members Only section. For login information, contact CTSI at 303-861-0507.