

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Labor and Safety
Safety Standard Operating Procedure Number: SP 10-9
Date: April 28, 2010
Status: FINAL

Title: Respiratory Protection Program

Purpose:

This Safety Standard Operating Procedure (SSOP) outlines the steps to be taken by supervisors to enroll designated field staff in the Agency's Respiratory Protection Program based on information contained in the written hazard assessment for those designated staff. It also outlines the requirements to be followed by all respirator users.

Definitions:

1. **Written Hazard Assessment:** The document that has been prepared by an employee's supervisor in accordance with SSOP No. SP-10-10, to evaluate an employee's exposure potential while performing field duties. The portion of the document that relates to the use of respiratory protection will be considered the "job specific respiratory protection plan."
2. **Job Specific Respiratory Protection Plan:** The portion of the written hazard assessment that outlines the requirements for the use of respiratory protection. This section of the assessment must outline the situations and/or conditions when respirators will be worn. It also must specify the type of respirator and appropriate cartridges and filters. It must also outline how respirators will be maintained, cleaned, inspected, and stored. The Agency Field Safety Coordinator should be consulted if assistance is needed in completing this section.
3. **Ohio EPA Respiratory Protection Program:** The program in place at the Ohio EPA to manage all activities related to respirator use at the Agency. This includes: identification of respirator users, medical clearance for respirator use, initial and refresher training, and initial and annual respirator fit testing.
4. **Air-purifying Respirator:** a respirator with an air-purifying filter, cartridge, or canister that removes specific air contaminants by passing ambient air through the air-purifying element.
5. **Powered air-purifying respirator (PAPR):** an air-purifying respirator that uses a blower to force the ambient air through air-purifying elements to the inlet covering.

6. **Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA):** an atmosphere-supplying respirator for which the breathing air source is designed to be carried by the user.
7. **Quantitative fit test (QNFT):** an assessment of the adequacy of respirator fit by numerically measuring the amount of leakage into the respirator.
8. **SCBA/HAZMAT Qualification:** A designation to designated staff whose duties require them to be SCBA qualified, and who have completed the most recent Agency SCBA/HAZMAT Qualification Training. This training is an annual requirement for all such designated staff.

Responsibilities:

1. **Supervisors of Field Staff:** Supervisors will use the written hazard assessment that has been prepared for field employees under their direct supervision to identify the need to be enrolled in the Agency's Respirator Protection Program. Supervisors will ensure that these employees have been designated as "respirator users" or "HAZMAT/SCBA" for their medical screening worker category and comply with all of the requirements for respirator use. The written hazard assessment must clearly state the type of respiratory protection to be used by the employee (e.g. air-purifying, PAPR, SCBA). Supervisors must also identify those employees who are in the respirator program on a voluntary basis. All of the program requirements apply to those employees who are entered in the program on a voluntary basis.
2. **Division/Office Chiefs:** Each Division or Office that has staff enrolled in the Respiratory Protection Program must ensure that sufficient funds are available for medical screening, purchase, and maintenance of all respiratory protection equipment. In addition, each program that has employees designated as "HAZMAT/SCBA" must provide a representative to the Agency's HAZMAT/SCBA Training workgroup which plans and conducts the annual qualification training.
3. **Agency Field Safety Program Coordinator:** This individual will serve as the program administrator for the respirator program as required by OSHA's 29 CFR 1910.134. This individual will ensure that arrangements are in place for all respirator users to obtain the necessary "medical clearance for respirator use." The Safety Management System (SMS) will be used to identify all respirator users and SCBA/HAZMAT qualified staff. The Coordinator will send out the annual fit testing schedule in the beginning of each calendar year to notify employees when fit testing will take place in their respective location.

4. **Respirator Users:** All staff who been identified by their supervisors, through the hazard assessment process, will review the respective written hazard assessment and follow all respirator use requirements. This includes use criteria, cartridge selection, inspection, maintenance and storage of respirators. All users must also remain current in the Agency's Respiratory Protection Program requirements, to include medical screening, fit testing, and training. It is the employee's responsibility to check the Safety Management System (SMS) to determine when specific program requirements are due (e.g. fit testing, respirator refresher training), and make any appointments as necessary.
5. **SCBA/HAZMAT Qualified Staff:** Along with all of the requirements listed above for respirator users, all staff who are SCBA/HAZMAT qualified must complete the Agency's Annual SCBA/HAZMAT Qualification Training held each fall.
6. **Agency Safety Program Coordinator:** Will establish procedures with our contracted medical screening clinics to identify all respirator users and HAZMAT/SCBA staff, to ensure that their annual medical screenings include a written medical clearance for the use of respiratory protection. The Agency Safety Program Coordinator will also maintain copies of all medical clearances in the employees' medical screening file. Notifications will made to the Agency Field Safety Program Coordinator in the event an employee is not medically cleared for respirator use. The Coordinator will also provide initial and refresher respirator training to all staff on the program.

Procedures:

1. Supervisors of field staff must complete a written hazard assessment for each employee under their supervision. These assessments will identify the need to be enrollment in the Agency's Respiratory Protection Program. The section of the hazard assessment that pertains to respirator use should specifically describe the potential hazards and respirator use criteria. It must also contain the specific type of respiratory protection needed (e.g. Full-face air-purifying, half-face air purifying, Powered Air-purify respirator, or self –contained breathing apparatus)
2. Supervisors must inform all affected staff that they will be enrolled in the Agency's Respiratory Protection Program and ensure that all program requirements remain current.
3. Using the written hazard assessment, Supervisors must determine if SCBA/HAZMAT Qualification is needed in addition to normal air-purifying respirator use.

4. Supervisors must ensure that all designated respirator users are coded as either a “respirator user” or “SCBA/HAZMAT” for the medical screening worker category.
5. Once the necessary medical screening and medical clearance for respirator use is obtained, the employee must contact the Agency’s Field Safety Coordinator to be scheduled for initial quantitative fit test and training.
6. Based on the results of the fit testing the appropriate manufacturer’s model and size can be purchased for the individual by the employee’s Division/Office.
7. Supervisors must ensure that appropriate cleaning and sanitizing supplies are on hand. An appropriate selection of filters and cartridges, depending on anticipated hazards should also be available.
8. All respirator users are responsible for conducting an inspection on their air-purifying respirators before and after each use.
9. All SCBA/HAZMAT qualified respirator users must complete the Agency’s Annual SCBA/HAZMAT Qualification Training each year to remain qualified. This training is provided each fall.
10. Prescription lens inserts (spectacle kits) will be provided by the Agency for those users who require corrective lenses. The spectacle frame kit should be purchased from the manufacturer of the selected respirator at the time of purchase. The lenses can then be made at an eyewear facility to match the user’s prescription. Divisions/Offices must have procedures in place to pay for, or reimburse an employee for this expense if the employee is required to pay the upfront costs for the prescription lenses.
11. Supervisors should contact the Agency’s Field Safety Program Coordinator if assistance is needed in developing the written hazard assessment as it pertains to respirator use.
12. All users of any type of respiratory protective devices must ensure that there is no facial hair that interferes with the face to mask seal at the time the respirator is worn for fit testing and during all subsequent field use.
13. All cartridges and filter selection must be made by consulting the appropriate respirator manufacturer’s website. Each manufacturer will have charts and tables available to assist in selecting the proper filter/cartridge based on anticipated hazards. The Agency Field Safety Program Coordinator should be contacted for assistance if needed.