



**Filtering Face-piece or Other Negative Pressure Respirators
Voluntary/Comfort Use Only
Supervisor/Employee Approval Form**

This form is for **VOLUNTARY/COMFORT USE ONLY** approval for use of a filtering face-piece respirator (aka. “dust mask” or “N95”) or other negative pressure respirator, when used only for protection against dusts, gases or vapors that do not exceed the OSHA regulated Permissible Exposure Limits. The employee should be able to remove the respirator at any time without concern about adverse health effects from the material in use. Since the respirator is not used for protection against OSHA regulated levels of substances, a fit-test approval is not required. Medical clearance is not required for filtering face-piece respirators, however an initial-only medical clearance is required for a ½ mask respirator. In addition, employees who have a history of heart or respiratory problems, or feel they may have such problems, should not use any respirator without physician’s approval.

Employee:

Supervisor:

Department:

Date:

Respirator used for:

If you feel there could be an exceedance of OSHA regulated levels of air contaminants, contact EH&S for an evaluation of your work area.

The employee is allowed use of a voluntary/comfort-only filtering face-piece or negative pressure respirators under the following conditions:

- Not to be worn for dusts, gases or vapors that exceed OSHA regulated Permissible Exposure Limits.
- Only for personal use, not to be shared, and must be stored in a clean location such as a Ziplock bag. Follow manufacturer’s instructions on use, maintenance and cleaning.
- Must be NIOSH approved for particulates (dusts, mists, fumes) and have two straps. An N95 filtering face-piece is recommended as a minimum; N95s with an exhaust valve or a ½ mask respirator can increase wearer comfort during extended use.
- Fit testing is not required and users are not required to be clean shaven.
- Use of a respirator does not introduce additional hazards into the work environment.

Employee’s Signature:

Supervisor’s Signature:

This form should be kept with your department Safety Plan or employee’s personnel records.

Appendix D § 29 CFR 1910.134 (Mandatory) Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required

Under the Standard

Respirators are an effective method of protection against designated hazards when properly selected and worn. Respirator use is encouraged, even when exposures are below the exposure limit, to provide an additional level of comfort and protection for workers. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. Sometimes, workers may wear respirators to avoid exposures to hazards, even if the amount of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by OSHA standards. If your employer provides respirators for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own respirator, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard.

You should do the following:

1. Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirators limitations.
2. Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.
3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases, vapors, or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke.
4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.

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