

Trent University Respiratory Protection Program

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PURPOSE	
<p>Trent University’s Respiratory Protection Program serves to protect the health of all workers that may be exposed to hazardous airborne particles or droplet hazards (dusts, fumes, mists, gases, vapours, aerosols, airborne pathogens) by providing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), respirator fit testing, and training on equipment usage. This program is written in accordance with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard Z94.4-18 (Selection, Use, and Care of Respirators), which requires a written respiratory protection program to be established if respiratory protection is used to protect workers from inhalation of hazardous atmospheres.</p>	
OBJECTIVES	
<p>The objective of Trent University’s Respiratory Protection Program is to protect worker health and safety through use of personal protective equipment where there is no possibility of implementing fully sufficient engineering or work practice controls. The Program serves to outline education and training requirements for workers, provision of respirator fit testing, and provision of appropriate procedures for caring for and storing respirators.</p>	
SCOPE	
<p>This program applies to all people using respiratory protection and doing work on behalf of Trent University, including faculty, unionized workers, exempt workers, and student workers, as well as volunteers.</p>	
RELATED DOCUMENTATION	
<p>Internal</p> <p>Half-Face Qualitative Fit Test Record</p> <p>N95 Qualitative Fit Test Record</p> <p>Respirator Self-Assessment Screening Record</p> <p>Supervisor Fit Test Request Form</p>	<p>External</p> <p>3M Respirator Selection Guide</p> <p>CSA Z94.4-18 Selection, Use, and Care of Respirators</p> <p>Occupational Health and Safety Act</p> <p>Ontario Regulation 833: Control of Exposure to Biological or Chemical Agents</p> <p>Workplace Safety and Insurance Act</p>

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS	
Airborne Contaminant	Dusts, fumes, mists, gases, vapours, aerosols, pathogens etc. that may be harmful to human health.
Air-purifying respirator	A respirator with an air-purifying filter, cartridge, or canister that removes specific contaminants by passing ambient air through the air-purifying element.
Assigned protection factor (APF)	The anticipated level of respiratory protection that would be provided by a properly functioning respirator or class of respirators to be properly fitted and trained users. Indicative of how much greater the contaminant concentration can be before protection is compromised. Determined by dividing exposure levels by the exposure limit (“hazard ratio”).
Atmosphere-supplying respirator	A respirator that supplies the user with breathing air/gas from a source independent of the ambient atmosphere.
Control	Measures taken to mitigate the severity or likelihood of a hazard causing harm.
Control of hazards	Control of Hazards means taking steps to protect people and to help avoid injuries, illnesses and incidents.
Fit Factor	A quantitative measure of the fit of a particular respirator to a particular individual.
Fit Test	The use of a qualitative or quantitative method to evaluate the fit of a specific make, model, and size of a respirator on an individual. The purpose of the fit test is to ensure the user can achieve an acceptable seal with a specific tight-fitting respirator.
Fit Tester	An individual who is qualified through training and experience to conduct fit testing appropriate for those respirators selected for use in the workplace, and using standardized fit test protocols.
Half-Mask Cartridge Respirator	An elastomer or silicone material respirator that is air purifying to help protect the user against certain chemical and/or airborne particulates. The mask fits the lower half of the user’s face covering their nose and mouth. The filters are replaceable and will not last indefinitely.
Hazard	Anything (e.g., chemicals, moving vehicles, etc.) that can hurt any person (cause injury), make them sick (illness) or cause property damage.
Hazardous atmosphere	Any atmosphere that is oxygen-deficient, exceeds occupational exposure limits, presents a fire/explosion hazard, and/or contains an airborne toxic or disease-producing contaminant in concentration deemed to be hazardous.
Hazard Management Tool	A step-by-step approach to recognize hazards, assess risk, control hazards and monitor the ongoing effectiveness of controls. WSIB Hazard Management Tool

Health Care Professional	An individual who is licensed by a provincial licensing authoring or equivalent to practice medicine or nursing and who possesses relevant experience and knowledge in the field of occupational health and safety.
Hierarchy of Controls	A ranking of risk control methods from the highest level of protection and reliability to the lowest, including elimination, substitution, engineering controls, administrative controls, and personal protective equipment.
Illness (occupational)	The OHSA defines an occupational illness as a condition that results from exposure in a workplace to a physical, chemical or biological agent to the extent that the normal physiological mechanisms are affected, and the health of the worker is impaired.
Immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH) atmosphere	An atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life, would cause adverse health effects, or would impair an individual's ability to escape.
Incident	May refer to an occurrence arising from any situation or task that resulted in, or had the potential to result in, injury, illness, damage to health or property, or fatalities.
N95 Respirator	<p>A tight fitting, air-purifying respirator that removes airborne particles.</p> <p>Particulate air purifying respirators are certified by the "National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health" (NIOSH) in the United States.</p> <p>NIOSH assigns air filtration ratings and they are classed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 95, 99 and 100 refer to the efficiency of the filter, where 95 filters out 95% of airborne particles 0.3 microns (μm) or larger, 99 filters out 99% and 100 refers to a 99.97% filter efficiency. • "N" rated respirators such as the N95 are indicated for workplaces that have "no-oil" mists in the air, • "R" rated respirators indicate "oil resistant" and, • "P" rated respirators indicate "oil proof." N95 respirators have limitations that are outlined by the manufacturer. <p>For example, a NIOSH class N95 respirator is one that if properly worn, is capable of filtering out 95% of airborne particles of 0.3 microns or more in size, but it is not suitable for workplaces where there may be oil mist in the air.</p>
Particulate	Any liquid or solid airborne contaminant, other than a gas or vapour, but including dusts, fumes, mists, fibres, fog, pollen, smoke, spores, and bioaerosols.
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)	A worker's protection against hazards when elimination, substitution, engineering, or administrative controls cannot be applied for do not sufficiently control hazards.

Principal Investigator (PI)	The lead of a research project or laboratory space with overall responsibility and authority.
Qualitative Fit Testing (QLFT)	QLFT is a pass/fail method that relies on the subject's sensory response to detect a challenge agent in order to assess the adequacy of respirator fit.
Quantitative Fit Testing (QNFT)	QNFT is a test method that uses an instrument to assess the amount of leakage into the respirator by measuring the ratio of ambient particulate count to particulate count within the respirator, to assess adequacy of respirator fit.
Residual Risk	The risk remaining after the hierarchy of controls has been implemented.
Risk Assessment	The overall process used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify hazards and risk factors that have the potential to cause harm (hazard identification). Analyze the risk associated with that hazard (risk analysis). Determine appropriate ways to eliminate the hazard or control the risk when the hazard cannot be eliminated (risk control).
Risk	Combination of the likelihood of the occurrence of harm and the severity of that harm.
Supervisor	A person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker.
Tight Fitting	Means that the efficacy of the respirator is directly related to the ability of the respirator to seal tightly against a person's clean-shaven face when applied correctly.
User Seal Check	A respirator seal check is an action conducted by the respirator user each time the equipment is donned, to determine if the respirator is properly seated to the face. User seal checks include the completion of a positive and negative pressure check.
Worker	Means any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A person who performs work or supplies services for monetary compensation. A secondary school student who performs work or supplies services for no monetary compensation under a work experience program authorized by the school board that operates the school in which the student is enrolled. A person who performs work or supplies services for no monetary compensation under a program approved by a college of applied arts and technology, university, private career college or other post-secondary institution.
Workplace	Means any land, premises, location or thing at, upon, in or near which a worker works, i.e. where the academic and administrative activities of Trent University take place.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Employer

Trent University’s Board of Governors has delegated the responsibilities of Employer to the President and Vice-Presidents. Management commitment at all levels is critical for providing leadership, vision and the resources required to implement and effective Health & Safety management, including the Respiratory Protection Program. The employer is responsible for:

- Ensuring that a worksite or activity is evaluated for potential respiratory hazards.
- Eliminating or minimizing potential respiratory hazards through implementation of the hierarchy of controls.
- Ensuring all illnesses or injuries resulting from respiratory hazards, which may or may not require medical aid, are recorded, rectified, and reported to governing authorities as required.
- Requiring a medical assessment if there is concern about a worker’s ability to wear a respirator.
- Establishing and implementing a written respirator program and designating a respirator program administrator.
- Providing the necessary resources to maintain all elements of the program:
 - Providing appropriate PPE.
 - Providing materials for proper care and storage of respirators.
 - Providing supervisors with the education and training necessary to ensure that workers use respirators properly.
 - Providing workers with the education, training, and supervision necessary for safe use of respirators.

Supervisors/Person of Authority

The OHSA defines supervisor as “a person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker.” The identification of a supervisor in the university workplace can be difficult as there are many unique positions that can attract supervisory duties, for example: Associate Vice-Presidents, University Secretary, Deans, Directors, Principals, University Registrar, University Librarian, Managers, Supervisors, Academic Chairs, and Principal Investigators. Responsibilities of supervisors include:

- Identify and manage potential respiratory hazards in the workplace, determine appropriate controls needed, and inform workers of presence of hazards and protective measures.
- Ensuring workers are aware of actual or potential respiratory hazards.
- Ensuring workers are aware of the controls in place to protect them from the actual or potential respiratory hazards.
- Communicate to those who require respirator fit testing and training of the requirement to do so.
- Arrange for workers to receive necessary training and are provided fit testing by a qualified individual.
- Ensure workers are knowledgeable and understand the requirements for respirator usage in the workplace.
- Encourage workers to report any respiratory hazards or concerns in the workplace.
- To ensure workers comply with safe use and care of respirators as described in this procedure and CSA Z94.4-18 Selection, Use, and Care of Respirators.

- Ensure the Human Resources Department, Health & Safety, is notified of any injuries or illnesses reported to them.
- To work cooperatively with the Human Resources Department, Health & Safety, and others as required, regarding the development of accommodation strategies for those unable to wear an N95, half-mask respirator, or higher levels of respiratory protection.
- Where required, provide funds from operating budget for the purchase of personal protective equipment, materials to properly maintain said equipment, and internal costs of fit testing.

Workers (Respirator Users)

- Must participate in all aspects of respirator training and fit testing and be re-fitted at least every 2 years or as indicated by this program and the *CSA Standard Z94.402*.
- Must be [clean-shaven](#) where the seal on the respirator comes in contact with the facial skin, for both the fit testing procedures and when using the respirator for protection.
- Complete Respirator Self-Assessment Screening Record and report to their supervisor any change in personal health or condition that may interfere with ability to safely use a respirator.
- Report to their immediate supervisor the absence of or defect in their respirator of which the worker is aware and which may endanger themselves, or any conditions that may affect the fit of their respirator.
- Wear appropriate respiratory protection when performing tasks or working in an area where respiratory hazards may exist.
- Inspect the respirator condition prior to each use and at intervals needed to ensure continued effective operation.
- Perform user seal checks after each donning of a tight-fitting respirator and use respirator in accordance with training received and the manufacturer's instructions.
- Clean, maintain, and store their respirator in accordance with training received and the manufacturer's instructions.
- Understanding the limitations of their respirators and following manufacturer's instructions.

Human Resources Department, Health & Safety Office

- Administer the Respiratory Protection Program and regularly monitor effectiveness.
- Assist with identifying and assessing respiratory hazards and worker exposure.
- Assist with the identification of the appropriate respiratory protection.
- Develop educational and training material, and ensure users of respiratory protection receive information required.
- Provide fit testing and training on proper use of respirators.
- Maintain all associated documentation related to the fit testing process.

Joint Health and Safety Committee representatives

- Identify potential respiratory hazards through workplace inspections.
- Bring forward employee concerns for committee discussion and review, as needed.
- Regularly review Trent University Respirator Protection Program and make recommendations as needed.

HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

When there are potential respirator hazards in the workplace, the supervisor shall perform a hazard assessment to determine which, if any, the respiratory hazards are present, and to assist in the selection of hazard controls, including an appropriate respirator where required. Health and Safety should be consulted as necessary to provide assistance with the hazard assessment. The assessment of a respiratory hazard includes the following:

- Identification of what contaminants are present in the workplace;
- Identification of the physical states of all airborne contaminants;
- Determination of the likelihood of inhalation (or other exposure mode) of the contaminants;
- Measurement or estimation of the concentration of the contaminants;
- Determination if an atmosphere is potentially oxygen deficient;
- Identify an appropriate occupational exposure limit for each airborne contaminant;
- Determination if an atmosphere is IDLH;
- Determination of applicable regulations or standards for a contaminant and whether a specific respirator is prescribed;
- Referral to safety data sheets with all products used and whether a specific respirator is prescribed;
- Determination for particulate hazards if oil is present, and;
- Determination of whether a contaminant can be absorbed through, or is irritating to, the skin or eyes.

Upon hazard identification and assessment, the following procedure should be executed if:

- Elimination or reduction control measures are not practical, adequate, or feasible or;
- Engineering and/or administrative controls are being instituted or;
- During shutdown for maintenance, repair, or emergency.

PROCEDURE

Arranging Fit Test

1. Upon identifying a potential need for respirator use, the supervisor or PI completes [Fit Test Request Form](#), which requires provision of:
 - Name(s) of workers that require fit testing,
 - Details on respirator selection, hazards, and activities that require protection,
 - Acknowledgement of the authorization and conditions of respirator use.

The Health and Safety Office receives and reviews the request. Health and Safety will consult with the requesting supervisor/PI if more information is required.
2. Health and Safety will instruct workers to complete the Safe Use of Respirators training module on VIP. The training may also be provided verbally at the time of the fit test. The training will include:
 - Types of respiratory hazards and applicable legislation;
 - Description of types of respirators and their purpose;
 - Intended use and limitations of a respirator;
 - Donning and doffing procedures;
 - User seal checks;
 - Purpose and kinds of respirator fit testing;

- Cleaning, storage, inspection, and maintenance procedures.
- 3. Health and Safety will schedule a fit test with the worker(s). Conduction of the test is dependent on completion of the Self-Assessment Screening Record. The Record will determine if the worker has any medical conditions which may impact their ability to wear a respirator. If such conditions are identified, the worker may be required to undergo testing or consultation with a medical professional prior to use of a respirator or identification of appropriate accommodation.
- 4. Health and Safety will upload all associated documentation, training, and test records onto the worker's VIP profile.

Recertification and Frequency

Training and fit testing is mandatory prior to use of any respirator. Fit testing is subsequently required every two years, or sooner should there be changes to medical conditions, facial structure, level of exposure to hazards, type of hazards, or activities performed while wearing the respirator. Such changes to facial structures may include but are not limited to the following, which may adversely affect the usage and/or seal of the respirator:

- Medical conditions that could impact respirator fit
- Dental changes such as new dentures or major reconstruction
- Facial scarring
- Facial cosmetic surgery
- Significant weight gain or loss (including pregnancy weight gain), i.e. >10% body mass at time of initial fit test

Workers will receive notification via automatic email from VIP 30 days before fit test expiration that a new fit test must be completed.

External Employers or Agencies

On occasion, Health and Safety may be requested to provide fit tests for non-Trent employees or students. In situations such as this, the supervisor should first complete the [Supervisor Authorization/Request Form](#) and send a copy to healthandsafety@trentu.ca.

Health and Safety will provide the [Respirator Self-Assessment Screening Record](#) form to the workers, to be completed and returned to healthandsafety@trentu.ca.

Health and Safety will arrange to perform the fit test and provide in-person training at the time of the test. The worker and supervisor will be provided with copies of all forms and documentation via email following completion of the fit test.

User seal checks

Respirator users will be trained on how to perform user seal checks and directed to perform such checks prior to each use of the respirator. ****User seal checks do not substitute for fit tests**.**

To perform seal checks:

Before doing any seal check, make sure your respirator has all its inlet and exhaust valves. Make sure that the valves are in good condition and lie flat. Doing these checks will help you tell whether you have a good seal and whether the valves are in place and working.

If the respirator is to be used with any other personal protective equipment – such as goggles, hearing protection, or a hard hat – all seal checks must be done while you are wearing this equipment.

- **Negative-pressure user seal check:** create a slightly negative air pressure inside the respirator facepiece by inhaling. Negative-pressure user seal checks are performed as follows:
 1. Put on respirator and other PPE. Tighten the head straps until the respirator feels snug but comfortable. Wear the respirator for a few minutes so that it will warm up and conform to your face better.
 2. Close off the inlet opening of the cartridges or filters by covering them gently with your hands. If you are using an N95 respirator, cover as much of the respirator as possible. If you are using a PAPR or air-supplied respirator, close off or disconnect the hose to stop the air flow.
 3. Breathe in slightly to create a vacuum. Hold for a few seconds.
 4. If there is a good seal, the facepiece should collapse slightly against your face and stay collapsed. No air should leak into the facepiece past the sides, top, or bottom.
 5. If the facepiece doesn't collapse or stay collapsed, there is an air leak. Check the exhalation valve(s) and try readjusting the respirator on your face and head straps. Perform the seal check again. If a good seal cannot be obtained, try a different size, make, or model of respirator.

- **Positive-pressure user seal check:** create a positive pressure in the facepiece when breathing out slightly. Positive-pressure user seal checks are performed as follows:
 1. Put on respirator and other PPE. Tighten the head straps until the respirator feels snug but comfortable. Wear the respirator for a few minutes so that it will warm up and conform to your face better.
 2. Cover the exhaust valve opening by gently covering it with your hand.
 3. Breathe out gently to force air into the facepiece. Hold for a few seconds.
 4. If you have a good seal, the facepiece should bulge or puff out slightly from your face. No air should leak out of the facepiece past the sides, top, or bottom.
 5. If the facepiece does not bulge, there is an air leak. Adjust the respirator and head straps. If a good seal cannot be obtained, try a different size, make, or model or respirator.
 6. After a successful user seal check, the fit testing protocol shall be executed.

Fit Testing Protocol

Trent University may provide qualitative or quantitative fit tests (QLFT, QNFT). QLFT is considered acceptable when exposures are <10x the occupational exposure limit, and will be primarily performed for use of N95 and half-face respirators.

Qualitative Fit Test Protocol

QLFT is a pass/fail method that relies on the subject's sensory response to detect a challenge agent in order to assess the adequacy of respirator fit. Prior to fit testing, the person receiving the test must ensure they do not eat, drink, or smoke/vape anything other than water nor chew gum for 30 minutes prior to the test. All persons must be clean-shaven prior to fit testing as identified in the *CSA standard Z94.4-02*.

Sensitivity Test Protocol

Bitrex (bitter test agent) will be used for QLFTs. Before conducting the respirator fit test, a sensitivity test will be performed to ensure the individual can detect the bitter taste agent. The sensitivity test will be performed as follows:

1. The user will don the fit testing hood.

2. The user will be instructed to breathe through their mouth with their tongue at the front. The user will be asked to indicate immediately when they taste the solution.
3. The nebulizer will spray the testing solution into the hood. The tester will count and record the number of squeezes it takes for the solution to be tasted.
4. After detection, the user will drink water and wait until the taste has cleared.
5. If the solution is not detected after 30 sprays of the nebulizer, Saccharin may be used as a testing agent or a quantitative fit test will be performed.

Bitter aerosol fit test procedure

If any other PPE will be regularly used while wearing the respirator, it should be worn for this test to ensure the respirator seal is unaffected.

1. The user shall don their respirator and other PPE, if applicable. The worker will don the fit test hood. The front of the hood should be clear of the respirator and provide sufficient room for free head movement.
2. The user will be instructed to breathe through their mouth with their tongue at the front for the duration of the test. The user will be asked to indicate immediately if they taste the solution at any time during the test.
3. The user will perform the following seven exercises, for one minute each. These exercises are intended to mimic movements the user would normally perform while wearing the respirator to ensure a good seal can be maintained.
 - Breathing normally.
 - Breathing deeply.
 - Turning head side-to-side.
 - Nodding head up-and-down.
 - Reading the Rainbow Passage aloud.
 - Bending at the waist.
 - Breathing normally.

The tester will spray an initial dose into the hood at the beginning of the test. Every 30 seconds afterwards, the solution will be sprayed into the hood. The number of squeezes for the initial dose and every 30 seconds will be determined by the number of sprays required during the sensitivity test, as follows:

Number of squeezes needed in sensitivity test	Number of squeezes needed for initial dose (start of fit test)	Number of squeezes every 30 seconds
1-10	10	5
11-20	20	10
21-30	30	15

4. If the user does not detect the solution, the test is passed.
5. If the user detects the solution at any point during the fit test, the test is failed and will be stopped. The hood and respirator shall be removed and the taste of the solution will be cleared with water and waiting. The worker may adjust the fit of the respirator on the face and straps,

and reattempt the test. If the test is failed again, a different size, make, or model of respirator will be used.

The fit tester shall disinfect the test hood after each fit test.

The fit tester will maintain a fit test record, identifying the user as having received a successful fit test for that respirator. The user will be considered successfully fit tested for the same size, model, and make of respirator only. Use of any other respirator requires a separate fit test.

Quantitative Fit Test Protocol

Quantitative fit testing shall be provided:

- If a full-facepiece respirator is requested.
- If a SCBA or supplied air respirator is requested.
- If an APF >10 is required (i.e., if airborne concentrations of contaminations are >10x the occupational exposure limit).

Quantitative fit testing will be performed in accordance with the machine manufacturer's instructions. Fit tests shall only be performed using a machine that receives annual calibration, inspection, and is cared for and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Fit tests will only be provided by a qualified fit tester. The fit test must be competent through training on respirators and fit test procedures, and experience.

Recordkeeping

Health and Safety will maintain a record of:

- Supervisor's Fit Test Request Form
- VIP training module certificate and/or record of verbal provision of training
- Respirator Self-Assessment Screening Record
- Fit Test Record (QLFT or QNFT)

All forms will be saved to the Official Documents section of the user's VIP profile. Forms will be accessible to the user and their supervisor.

Conditions for Accommodations

Individuals with medical conditions or other reasons that prevent use of a respirator must convey such restriction to their supervisor and Health and Safety. Accommodations will be managed on a case-by-case basis depending on the situation.

Similarly, individuals who may be unable to don a respirator or achieve a tight seal due to religious clothing or facial hair should consult with their supervisor and Health and Safety for alternate solutions.

Cleaning, maintenance, storage of respirators

Respirators will be maintained, cleaned, and stored as instructed by the manufacturer.

Prior to each use, the respirator should be inspected by the user, including:

- Inspect facepiece for general condition: wear, creases, distortion, warping.
- Inspect straps for wear and tear, lack of elasticity, knots, broken or faulty buckles.
- Inspect valves for damage, dirt, missing or damaged covers.
- Check filters or cartridges are the correct protection for the hazard, fit securely in the facepiece, are free from damage or dirt, and are made by the same manufacturer as the respirator.

The following procedure can be used to adequately clean and sanitize most respirators:

1. Remove any filters, cartridges, or canisters.
2. Wash the respirator (and associated parts) in warm water mixed with a mild detergent. Use soft wash cloth or hands only, to ensure no damage to the unit. Solvents which can affect rubber and other parts shall not be used.
3. Rinse the respirator in clean, warm water.
4. Wipe the respirator with disinfectant wipes (70% isopropyl alcohol) or a sanitizing foam to kill germs.
5. Air dry in a clean area in such a way to prevent distortion.
6. Clean other respirator parts as recommended by the manufacturer.
7. Reassemble the respirator (e.g., replace the cartridges) and inspect valves, head straps, and replacing any defective parts.
8. Place in a sealed, clean, dry plastic bag (or other suitable container) for storage. Respirators should be stored away from dust, sunlight, extreme temperatures, excessive moisture, and chemicals. It must be stored so that the respirator does not become deformed (i.e., no items stored on top of it or in too small a space).

Damaged respirators shall not be used. If during an inspection, a worker discovers a fault or defect in a respirator, they will make their supervisor aware and remove the equipment from service. The respirator may be repaired or otherwise disposed of and a replacement provided. Supervisors are responsible for the administration of supplies needed to properly wear, use, and care for the respirator.

Manufacturer's instructions should be referred to identify cartridge or filter lifespan. Some cartridges may have an expiration date. Lifespan will largely be affected by frequency of use and amount of exposure to the environment or agent they are protecting against. Ultimately, service life should be determined by the most limiting factor:

- Expiration date
- Manufacturer's recommendation
- After each use, where conditions apply
- As requested by the employer
- When contaminate odour is detected (after having established the respirator fits correctly)
- When restriction to airflow has occurred as evidenced by increased effort by user to breathe normally

RESPIRATOR SELECTION

Respirator selection shall be based on a systematic review of the hazards and knowledge of standards, regulatory criteria, and manufacturer information on the types of respirators and their limitations to ensure that appropriate respirators are selected for the intended conditions of use. Equally important is the selection of the correct cartridge or filter to use with the respirator.

The supervisor, in consultation with Health and Safety as needed, should determine the appropriate respiratory protection required for the identified hazard.

Where regulations exist, including occupational exposure limits, they will take precedence in selecting the appropriate respiratory protection. In addition to regulatory requirements, evidence-based contaminant-specific best practices or infection prevention and control guidance shall be considered during the selection process.

If respirators serve as a protective control against exposure to a chemical agent, refer to the safety data sheet's requirements for personal protective equipment.

During selection, include:

- Determination of APF required, choose respirator that can reduce exposure to below the OEL.
- Consider compatibility with other PPE (glasses, goggles, hard hat, etc.).
- Consider comfort and ability to perform work while wearing – if strenuous, respirators that are lightweight and streamlined may be preferable.
- Individual differences, may need to select from various models and sizes.

Only respirators approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) or other respirators acceptable as per CSA-294.4-18 will be provided to workers.

EVALUATION

The Respirator Protection Program will be regularly evaluated and more frequently if there are changes in the workplace, incidents, or worker feedback indicates a need. Regular evaluation will include:

- Reviewing training records and fit test results.
- Observing respirator use in the workplace to verify proper selection, fit, usage, storage, and maintenance.
- Assessing worker feedback regarding comfort, availability, and effectiveness.
- Reviewing exposure monitoring results and incident reports to confirm adequate protection.
- Identifying gaps in compliance, equipment, or training, and implementing corrective actions.

Findings will be documented below, communicated to management and workers, and used to improve the program's overall effectiveness.

FORMS / RECORD KEEPING

Health and Safety will maintain a record of:

- Supervisor's Fit Test Request Form
- Respirator Self-Assessment Screening Record
- Fit Test Record (QLFT or QNFT)
- Record of training

All forms will be saved to the user's VIP profile under the Official Documents section, and will accessible to the user and their supervisor.

External Employers or Agencies

On occasion, Health and Safety may be requested to provide fit tests for non-Trent employees or students. In situations such as this, the supervisor/instructor and workers/students will receive copies of all documentation via email.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

[Ontario Regulation 833: Control of Exposure to Biological or Chemical Agents](#)

[Workplace Safety and Insurance Act](#)

CHANGES TRACKING	
DETAILS OF CHANGES	DATE CHANGED