



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MS AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY
EXPERIMENT STATION

MAFES DAWG TRACKS

A respirator is a piece of personal protective equipment (PPE) that protects the wearer from breathing in contaminated air that is hazardous.

There are 2 questions that determine if you need to know more about respirators ...

- 1. Do you work with hazardous chemicals, gases or pesticides?**
- 2. Will you potentially be exposed to breathing in hazardous substances, gases, vapors, or particulates?**

The risk of exposure is increased or decreased depending on the way a task is performed when using the product. This question regarding exposure can be answered by reading a products label and safety data sheet. Manufacturers provide requirements for respiratory protection that are product- and task-specific; those documents will specify the type of respirator and filter needed.

If **YES** is the answer to the above questions, you need the required...

- ✓ **Medical evaluation** (at least once)
- ✓ **Respirator fit test** (annually)
- ✓ **Training** (annually)

Having these 3 items before you begin wearing the respirator will ensure you are healthy enough to wear a respirator while working, it fits you correctly & you know how to take care of it.

Respirator medical evaluation –

Make an appointment with the Student Health Center (or other medical physician). This visit should be paid for by your employer/dept., so coordinate with them about payment.

It involves a questionnaire “Medical Evaluation Form” the employer & employee both answer before the appointment and a “Physician Medical Clearance Form” that the doctor completes. Both forms can be found here <https://www.ehs.msstate.edu/focus-areas/respiratory-protection> .

Respirator fit test -

After you have been cleared by a physician, you need to be sure that the respirator you wear fits you correctly. Sometimes a certain brand respirator seals better than another simply because everybody has a unique face shape. What is good for your co-worker might not fit you best. So, a fit test by a safety professional will ensure your chosen respirator delivers optimal protection. Please contact Leslie Woolington or Ben Sharpe for help with this.

Training -

Because a correctly used respirator is vital to staying healthy while performing your job, we want you to know all the ins and outs.

- Why the respirator is necessary and how improper fit, usage, or maintenance can compromise the protective effect of the respirator.
- Limitations and capabilities.
- How to inspect, put on and remove, use, and check the seals of the respirator.
- What the procedures are for maintenance and storage of the respirator.
- How to recognize medical signs and symptoms that may limit or prevent the effective use of respirators.

Departments/employers should keep documentation for personnel that requirements for respirators have been met.

Sources:

<http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/miscellaneous/how-comply-the-2015-revised-worker-protection-standard-for-agricultural>

<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.134>

For more info contact:

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