

Respiratory Protection Training

611.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to protect the health of members through the use of a respirator to avoid breathing air that is contaminated with harmful dusts, fogs, fumes, mists, gases, smokes, sprays and vapors.

In the event that engineering control measures cannot effectively eliminate exposure risks, suitable respirators and appropriate training shall be applied to hazardous conditions in accordance with the Respiratory Protection Program Policy.

This policy identifies which members must receive respiratory protection training, the minimum training curriculum and the requirements for recurrent training (8 CCR 5144(a)).

611.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Fresno County Fire Protection District to protect the health of members by providing respiratory protection training (8 CCR 5144 (k)).

611.3 PROCEDURE

The District shall provide effective respiratory protection training to all members who are required or expected to utilize respirators. For the purposes of this policy, respirators will include any tool, implement or device that filters ambient air, delivers compressed air, or recirculates filtered or treated air for inhalation by humans. Such devices include, but are not limited to, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), supplied-air respirators, canister or cartridge-type breathing masks, biohazard masks, over-the face dust or particle masks, rebreather units or any type of gas mask.

Respiratory protection training shall include, but not be limited to, the following (8 CCR 5144(k)):

- (a) The District shall ensure that each member can demonstrate knowledge of:
 - 1. Why the respirator is necessary and how improper fit, usage or maintenance can compromise its effectiveness.
 - 2. The limitations and capabilities of the respirator.
 - 3. How to use the respirator effectively in emergency situations, including situations in which the respirator malfunctions.
 - 4. How to inspect, put on, remove, use and check the seals of the respirator.
 - 5. The procedures for maintenance and storage of the respirator.
 - 6. How to recognize the medical signs and symptoms that may limit or prevent the effective use of a respirator.
 - 7. The general requirements of this policy.
- (b) The training shall be conducted in a manner that is easily understood by the member.

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- (c) The District shall provide the training prior to requiring the member to use a respirator in the workplace.
- (d) Retraining shall be administered annually and when the following situations occur:
 - 1. Changes in the workplace or the type of respirator render previous training obsolete
 - 2. Inadequacies in the member's knowledge or use of the respirator indicate that the member has not retained the requisite understanding or skill
 - 3. Any other situation arising in which retraining appears necessary to ensure safe respirator use

611.4 TRAINING RECORDS

The Training Chief shall be responsible for maintaining records of all respiratory protection training that is provided to members. At a minimum, the District should document the following:

- (a) The dates of the training sessions
- (b) A list of the topics or a summary of the content of the training sessions
- (c) The name or other identifier and job title of the members who received the training
- (d) The names, certificate number and qualifications of persons conducting the training
- (e) Documentation of each member's demonstrated performance in meeting the standards detailed in this policy (8 CCR 5144(m))

The Training Chief should maintain the training records in accordance with established records retention schedules.

611.5 APPENDIX D ADVISORY

Basic advisory information on respirators shall be provided by the District in any written or oral format to any member who chooses to wear a respirator, even if the use of the respirator is not mandated by the district or law (8 CCR 5144(k)(6)). The appendix D advisory content is shown below:

611.5.1 8 CCR 5144 APPENDIX D CONTENT

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 in order to provide an additional level of comfort and protection. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker.

Members may wear respirators to avoid exposures to hazards, even if the amount of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by Cal/OSHA. If the District provides respirators for voluntary use or if a privately owned respirator is available, certain precautions should be taken to ensure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard.

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Members should:

- Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirator's limitations.
- Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. The certification will define what the respirator is designed for and the protection level to be expected.
- Not wear a respirator into areas containing contaminants for which the respirator is not designated to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect against gases, vapors or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke.
- Keep track of the respirator so it is not mistakenly shared.