

# Technical Data Bulletin

## 3M Personal Safety Division

### #218 — 3M™ Versaflo™ Loose Fitting Facepieces, Hoods, and Helmets: Use with Facial Hair

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*Replaces all previously published materials on this subject until superseded.*

#### Introduction

The purpose of this Technical Data Bulletin is to provide guidance on the use of the 3M™ Versaflo™ loose fitting facepieces, hoods, and helmets with facial hair. Loose fitting headgear such as the S-Series and M-Series headgear are designed to be used with a breathing tube and a Powered Air Purifying Respirator (PAPR) or Supplied Air (SA) unit to form a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) approved respiratory protection system. These types of headgear form a partial seal with the wearer through a neck collar, inner shroud, or an elasticized faceseal. Depending on the type of loose fitting headgear, they can accommodate various amounts of facial hair. It is up to the user to select the proper headgear and follow user instructions to achieve respiratory protection.

#### Background

The United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Respiratory Protection Standard 29 CFR 1910.134 addresses the issue of respirator use and facial hair for tight fitting respirators in section [29 CFR 1910.134(g)(1)(i)]. This paragraph states that tight fitting respirators are not permitted to be worn by employees who have facial hair that comes between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face or that interferes with valve function. OSHA does not restrict the use of loose fitting headgear in uses with facial hair.

#### 3M Recommendations

Table 1 summarizes current 3M recommendations for use of the Versaflo™ Headgear with facial hair. Although the OSHA standard doesn't include facial hair restrictions for loose fitting types of headgear, 3M has not performed specific testing on its loose fitting headgear to

determine if facial hair in the sealing surface region affects the respiratory performance. In part, this is because of the difficulty involved in determining to what extent various levels and types of facial hair would affect respiratory performance. For loose fitting facepieces and hoods with an elasticized faceseal 3M recommends users are clean shaven where the faceseal contacts the wearers face. For hoods and helmets with an inner neck collar or an inner shroud that form a partial seal in the neck region of the wearer, 3M suggests that beards and facial hair should not extend into the sealing surface area of the hood or helmet.

**Facial hair exceeding these levels could result in improper seal, and could result in sickness, injury, or death.**

For additional information on the use of the 3M™ Versaflo™ Headgear, consult the *User Instructions* for the specific model of headgear or contact 3M Technical Service.

**Table 1**  
**3M™ Versaflo™ Headgear Facial Hair Guidance**

<b>3M™ Versaflo™ Headgear Model Numbers</b>	<b>Type of Headgear</b>	<b>Headgear Sealing Surface</b>	<b>Facial Hair Guidance</b>
S-103, S-133, S-133B, S-333	Loose fitting facepiece	Elasticized face seal	Users must be clean shaven where the respirator's elasticized face seal comes into contact with their face.
S-433, S-533	Hood	Elasticized face seal	Users must be clean shaven where the respirator's elasticized face seal comes into contact with their face.
S-403	Hood	Elasticized face seal with an inner shroud	Users must be clean shaven where the respirator's elasticized face seal comes into contact with their face.
S-605 (S-655), S-805 (S-855)	Hood	Neck collar	May be used with facial hair and beards that do not extend into the neck collar.
S-607(S-657), S-707 (S-757), S-807 (S-857)	Hood	Neck elastic and inner shroud	May be used with facial hair and beards that do not extend into the inner shroud.
M-105, M-107, M-305, M-307	Loose fitting facepiece	Elasticized face seal	Users must be clean shaven where the respirator's elasticized face seal comes into contact with their face.
M-405, M-407	Helmet	Neck collar	May be used with facial hair and beards that do not extend into the neck collar.

For more information, please contact:

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