

## How long does a filter last?

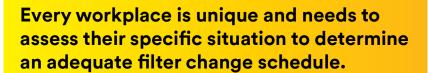
## When to replace or change filters in the respirator.

Particule Filters for reusable respirators and/or disposable/filtering facepiece respirators:

- When the breathing resistance becomes excessive to the wearer.
- If any damage occurs eg. broken strap, hole burnt in filtering facepiece etc.
- ✓ If it becomes unhygienic i.e. it has been coughed/sneezed into and the inside is in an unacceptable condition.

## Combination filters (Particulate and Gas/vapour) for reusable respirators:

- ✓ As the capacity of each will depend on the airborne concentrations being filtered – it will fill at its own rate and need to be changed when full. This may be at a different rate to the other.
- ✓ The service life (ie how long will it perform) of any Gas & Vapour (G&V) cartridge is affected by many factors capacity, concentration and identity of contaminants, breathing rates, humidity levels, ventilation, temperature, type of carbon etc.
- Smell and taste should NOT be used as a primary indicator for when to change a G&V cartridge.
- Some workplaces e.g. healthcare environments, may require facepieces/filters to be replaced after every use due to infection control procedures.
- Therefore, there is no specific timing involved and the frequency of replacement of products varies from task to task, situation to situation and product to product.



When a Gas & Vapour cartridge on resuable respirators have reached their capacity, it will no longer protect the wearer as the G&V will pass straight through to the wearer.

Particulate filters will keep removing contaminants but will become harder and harder to breathe through, increasing discomfort.



## Shelf life of Filters & Cartridges

Provided they are stored unopened in the original packaging, 3M cartridges and filters have a shelf life of three or five years (depending on the product) from manufacture date.

Once any gas & vapour cartridge is removed from their packaging they should be replaced after six months as recommended by Australian / New Zealand Standard 1715 irrespective of the duration of use (even if they have not been used).