Ensuring good fit for respiratory protection

One of the biggest contributors to reduced respiratory protection is poor fit.

Conducting a fit test to ensure that a respirator with a tight fitting facepiece provides an adequate seal to the wearer's face is considered a crucial part of a Respiratory Protection Program.

Reflecting this, a respiratory fit test is mandated for compliance to AS/NZS 1715:2009 (the standard for users of respiratory protection).

3M™ Qualitative Fit Test Kits are designed for fit testing disposable and half face respirators fitted with particulate or combination gas/vapour and particulate filters.

The power to protect your world.℠

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Importance of Respiratory Fit Testing

The Australia/New Zealand Standard 1715 emphasises a complete respiratory protection approach, including fit testing. It is important for employers and workers to understand this Standard.

A complete approach to a respiratory protection program - The AS/NZS 1715:2009 Standard stresses that all the elements of a program must be delivered to achieve the respiratory protection that is required. The Standard also stresses that the provision of an item of respiratory protective equipment is only part of an overall system of respiratory protection for all employees.

Fit testing - The Standard clearly mandates that this is a necessary part of any program – Section 2.6 states "the program administrator shall ensure a suitable fit test is carried out for all users of Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) with a close fitting facepiece."

The specifics and details of this Standard must be be read in full – a copy of the AS/NZS 1715:2009 Standard can be purchased online at http://infostore.saiglobal.com/store/

When to Fit Test

Fit testing must be carried out before the initial issue of a tight fitting facepiece.

Fit testing must be repeated at appropriate times such as:

- If the wearer loses or gains a significant amount of weight, has major dental work or sustains a major facial injury
- If a different size or model of respirator is specified
- At least annually or when specified by the company policy, e.g. at time of health surveillance check

Fit testing is in addition to the requirement to perform a fit check prior to each use as a gross determination of suitable fit.

This is an excerpt from "3M TechUpdate: Respirator Fit Testing" which can be found at 3m.com/au/ppesafety

3M™ Qualitative Fit Test Apparatus

The 3M Qualitative Fit Test apparatus FT-10 and FT-30 are designed for fit testing disposable and half face respirators fitted with particulate or combination gas/vapour and particulate filters.

Features & Benefits

- Offers fast, easy method for performing qualitative fit testing
- No calibration of equipment required
- No modification of facepiece required
- Test operator can be self-taught/instructed
- Each kit contains a hood and collar assembly, two nebulisers, sensitivity solution, test solution and detailed instructions
- Available with Sweet (FT-10 Saccharin) or Bitter (FT-30 Bitrex) solutions

For more information about 3M Safety products or solutions please contact us:

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