

Division of Labor Sample Asbestos Respirator Program

Note: The following sample respirator program serves as a non-mandatory guide to assist employers and employees in developing a written respirator program. If employees are exposed to respiratory hazards other than, or in addition to asbestos this sample program should not be used.

1.0 Purpose

(Note: Insert employer's name) has determined that employees may be exposed to a respiratory hazard during the course of performing asbestos abatement work. The hazard is the inhalation of carcinogenic asbestos fibers. The purpose of this program is to ensure that all personnel are protected from occupational exposure to asbestos. Personnel will be required to use respiratory protection while conducting asbestos abatement work. This written program will be readily available to our employees and representatives of the Iowa Division of Labor at the jobsite and at the home office.

2.0 Scope and Application

This program applies to all employees who occupationally wear respirators during asbestos activities. Respiratory protection shall be selected based upon 1910.134 and 1926.1101 and shall be provided at no cost to the employee.

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 Program Administrator(s)

The Program Administrator(s) are responsible for administering the respiratory protection program. The Program Administrator for this program is (insert name(s) or job title).

Duties of the program administrator include:

- *Selection of respiratory protection options.*
- *Administering the medical surveillance program.*
- *Arranging quantitative or qualitative fit testing*
- *Procurement of respiratory protection equipment and supplies for staff.*
- *Developing procedures and schedules for the proper cleaning, disinfecting, storing, inspecting, repairing, discarding, and otherwise maintaining respirators.*
- *Arranging for and/or conducting training which addresses the respiratory hazards of asbestos and the proper use of respirators.*
- *Maintaining records required by the program.*
- *Evaluating the program.*
- *Updating written program, as needed.*

3.2 Asbestos Personnel

Each worker has the responsibility to wear the appropriate respirator when and where required and in the manner in which they were trained. Workers must also:

- *Care for, maintain and inspect their respirators as instructed and store them in a clean and sanitary location.*

- *Inform his/her supervisors if the respirator no longer fits well and request a new one that fits properly. Issues which may influence fit include weight loss or gain, facial scarring, surgery, etc.*
- *Inform his/her supervisor of any problems associated with the respirator. Problems may include bad valves, cracked facepiece, worn straps, missing parts, etc.*
- *Any respirator which has identified deficiencies will be taken out of service and replaced. The Program Administrator will have the discretion of discarding or having maintenance performed on the respirator.*

4.0 Program Elements

4.1 Selection Procedures

The Program Administrators will perform a preliminary survey to insure the proper selection of respiratory protection. This survey should be an integral part of the Initial Exposure Assessment/Negative Exposure Assessment that is mandated in the 1926.1101 Asbestos Standard. The Initial Exposure Assessment/ Negative Exposure Assessment will be documented and available at the jobsite.

- *If a change in conditions warrant that a higher level of respiratory protection may be necessary, immediately exit the asbestos work area and notify management. (Note: An example of this might be a negative air machine (NAM) becoming inoperable, etc.)*
- *All respirators must be certified by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and shall be used in accordance with the terms of that certification. Also, all filters must be labeled with the appropriate NIOSH approval label and be made by the same manufacture as the facepiece. The label must not be removed or defaced while it is in use. (Note: Filters shall be N, R, or P100s, for half mask dual cartridge respirators. HEPA filters are no longer marketed for half mask dual cartridge respirators. There shall be no mixing of different respirator manufacturer's parts.)*

4.2 Medical Evaluation

Staff is required to pass a medical exam prior to wearing respirators on the job. Employees are not permitted to wear respirators until a physician has determined that they are physically fit to don a respirator. The medical examination will be conducted by, or under the supervision of, a licensed physician at (Note: Name the clinic or hospital). The Program Administrator will provide a copy of this program to the physician prior to the scheduling of the examination. The medical examination and physician's written opinion will comply with paragraph (m) of 1926.1101.

4.3 Fit Testing

Fit testing is required for employees wearing tight-fitting respirators. Employees will be fit tested by the following method (Note: Name the specific quantitative or qualitative fit test method used. It shall be a method from Appendix A of 1910.134, the Respiratory Protection standard). Employees will be fit tested with the make, model, and size of respirator that they will actually wear (Note: Name the make/s and model/s here). Fit tests will be conducted:

- *Prior to allowing an employee to wear a respirator;*
- *At least annually thereafter; and,*
- *Whenever the employee reports, or the employer, physician, supervisor or program administrator make visual observations of changes in the employee's physical condition that could affect respirator fit (e.g., obvious change in body weight, facial scarring, etc.).*

The employer will develop, document and maintain a fit test record in accordance with 1910.134(m).

4.4 General Use Procedures:

- *Employees will use their respirators under conditions specified by this program, and in accordance with the training they receive on the use of each particular model. In addition, the respirator shall not be used in a manner for which it is not certified by NIOSH or by its manufacturer. All employees shall conduct user seal checks each time that they wear their respirator.*
- *Employees shall use either the positive or negative pressure check (depending on which test works best for them) specified in Appendix B-1 of the Respiratory Protection Standard.*
- *Employees are not permitted to wear tight-fitting respirators if they have any condition such as facial scars, facial hair, or missing dentures, that prevents them from achieving a good seal. Employees are not permitted to wear headphones, jewelry, eyewear, or other articles that may interfere with the facepiece-to-face seal.*
- *For any malfunction of a respirator (e.g., such as breakthrough, facepiece leakage, or improperly working valve), the respirator wearer shall immediately exit the contaminated area. Care should be exercised to ensure minimal exposure occurs until proper respiratory protection is restored.*

4.5 Cleaning, Maintenance, Change Schedules and Storage

4.5.1 Cleaning

Employees shall regularly clean and disinfect their respirators in accordance with 1910.134 Appendix B-2. Respirators shall be cleaned daily or more frequently if necessary. Respirators will be issued for the exclusive use of the assigned wearer.

Employees will use the following procedures when cleaning and disinfecting respirators:

- *Disassemble respirator, removing any filters, canisters, or cartridges.*
- *Wash the facepiece and associated parts in a mild detergent with warm water. Do not use organic solvents.*
- *Rinse completely in clean warm water.*
- *Wipe the respirator with disinfectant or the manufacturer's recommended wipes to kill germs.*
- *Air dry in a clean area.*
- *Reassemble the respirator.*
- *Place in a clean, dry plastic bag or other air tight container. (Note: Specific instruction should be given here, e.g. plastic bags, air tight containers, etc.).*

Note: The Program Administrator will ensure an adequate supply of appropriate cleaning and disinfection material is available. If supplies are low, employees should contact their Program Administrator.

4.5.2 Maintenance

Employees shall properly maintain respirators at all times in order to ensure that they function properly. Employees shall conduct a thorough visual inspection for cleanliness and defects prior to each use.

The following checklist will be used when inspecting respirators:

- *Facepiece: contamination, cracks, tears, or holes, facemask distortion, cracked or loose lenses/faceshield*
- *Headstraps: breaks or tears, broken buckles*
- *Valves: contamination, residue, or dirt, cracks or tears in valve material*
- *Filters/Cartridges: approval designation, expiration dates for changeout, gaskets, cracks or dents in housing, insure proper cartridge for hazard*
- *Missing parts.*

Note: If any of the above conditions are noted the respirator shall be taken out of service and given to the program administrator.

4.5.3 Change Schedules

Employees wearing Half Mask, Dual Cartridge air purifying respirators (APRs) with filters for protection against asbestos shall change the filters on their respirators when they first begin to experience difficulty breathing (i.e., resistance) while wearing their masks. Employees wearing powered air purifying respirators (PAPRs) with filters for protection against asbestos shall change the filters based upon the manufacturer's recommendations.

4.5.4 Storage

Respirators must be stored in a clean, dry area, and in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. Each employee will clean and inspect their own respirator prior to storage in accordance with the provisions of this program and will store their respirator in the following locations: (Note: Identify the location of where the respirator will be stored at the jobsite and where it will be stored during transport to and from the jobsite).

4.6 Training

4.6.1 Curriculum

The Program Administrators will provide training to respirator users on the contents of the Respiratory Protection Program and their responsibilities under it, and on the OSHA Respiratory Protection standard. Employees will be trained prior to using a respirator in the workplace.

The training course will cover the following topics:

- *the Respiratory Protection Program*
- *the OSHA Respiratory Protection standard*
- *why the respirator is necessary and how improper fit, usage or maintenance can compromise the protective effect of the respirator,*
- *proper selection and use of respirators*

- *limitations and capabilities of respirators*
- *inspection of the respirator*
- *donning and doffing the respirator*
- *performance of the seal check*
- *maintenance and storage*

4.6.2 Frequency

Employees will be trained:

- *prior to assignment to a job which requires the use of respiratory protection,*
- *annually and,*
- *as needed.*

Respirator training will be documented by the Program Administrators and the documentation will include the type, model, and size of respirator for which each employee has been trained and fit tested.

5.0 Program Evaluation

At least annually, the Program Administrators will conduct an evaluation of the workplace to ensure that the provisions of this program are being implemented. The evaluations will include regular consultations with employees who use respirators and a review of air monitoring. Problems identified will be noted and addressed by the Program Administrators. The evaluations will be documented and maintained for at least one year.

6.0 Documentation and Recordkeeping

A written copy of this program and the OSHA standards 1910.134 Respiratory Protection and 1926.1101 Asbestos will be available in the Program Administrator's office and at all jobsites. Also maintained in the Administrator's office are copies of training and fit test records. These records will be updated as new employees are trained, as existing employees receive refresher training, and as new fit tests are conducted. Records will be readily available to employees and representatives of the Iowa Division of Labor and will be maintained according to the 1910.1020 Access to Employee Exposure and Medical Records standard.