

## Respiratory Protection. 233rd BSB Safety and Occupational Health (OH) Program

1. REFERENCE: Respiratory protective equipment (RPE) will only be used IAW UR 385-7, Respiratory Protection Program, and as means of controlling employees exposure to hazardous airborne contaminants.

### 2. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

a. The issuance of respiratory protection shall be limited to employees who have documented medical evidence in official files that they are qualified to use such protective devices.

b. Respirators are issued based upon a need for employee protection, and then only after thorough evaluation by competent industrial hygiene or occupational safety and health professionals of the tasks to be performed.

c. Respiratory protection is permitted at Army activities having a written program for respirators that has been approved by the Safety or Industrial Hygiene Office.

3. PERMISSIBLE PRACTICE: In the control of occupational diseases caused by breathing air containing harmful dusts, fogs, fumes, mists, gases, smokes, sprays, or vapors, the primary objective shall be to prevent atmospheric contamination. This shall be accomplished as far as practical by acceptable engineering controls. If it has been determined that engineering controls are not feasible, respiratory protection may be used, provided Army and OSHA/Host Nation (HN) criteria are followed.

### 4. RESPIRATOR REQUIREMENTS:

a. All respirators used by Army employees shall be approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) or HN approval for German manufactured respirators.

b. The selection of respirators shall be based upon:

(1) The nature of the hazardous operation or process.

(2) The activities of employees in the hazardous area.

(3) The physical characteristics and functional capabilities and limitations of the various types of respirators.

(4) Respirator protection factors.

c. Employees shall be quantitatively or qualitatively fit test annually to ensure a good seal is achieved with the assigned respirator.

d. Airborne exposure levels shall be monitored on an as needed basis for surveillance of work area conditions and degree of employee exposure by the Industrial Hygiene Office.

### 5. EMPLOYEE REQUIREMENTS:

a. Each respirator user shall be provided with a respirator which has been fit tested by an individual who is qualified by education or experience to perform fit testing.

b. A respirator equipped with a face piece shall not be worn if facial hair comes between the sealing periphery of the face piece and the face or, if facial hair interferes with valve function.

c. The wearer of a respirator equipped with a full-face piece, helmet, hood, or suit shall not be allowed to wear contact lenses.

d. Employees who are required to use respiratory protection shall be enrolled in a medical surveillance program.

e. Employees shall be given training which will include explanations and discussions of:

(1) The respiratory hazard and the effects if respirators are not used properly.

(2) The engineering and administrative controls being used and the need for respirators to provide protection.

(3) The reasons for selecting a particular type of respirator.

(4) The function, capabilities, and limitations of the selected respirator.

(5) The method of donning the respirator and checking its fit and operation.

(6) The proper wearing of the respirator.

(7) Respirator maintenance.

(8) Respirator inspection procedures.

(9) Recognizing and handling emergency situations.

(10) How to select a respirator for a specific hazard, protection factors, and capabilities of various filter types.

#### 6. RESPIRATOR INSPECTIONS, CLEANING AND STORAGE:

a. Employees shall inspect the respirator prior to each use to ensure proper working condition. The inspection must include all components of the respirator.

b. Any defect observed during the course of the inspection, shall be grounds for not using the respirator pending repair or replacement of defective parts.

c. Respirators will be cleaned after each use.

d. Each respirator user shall be instructed on the required cleaning procedures.

e. The minimum cleaning elements shall be:

(1) Disassembly of the respirator.

(2) Cleaning of the respirator in an approved cleaner or detergent solution.

(3) Rinsing with clean, warm water.

(4) Drying in warm air.

(5) Inspecting component parts for cleanliness and defective parts.

(5) Repackaging in a clean plastic bag with appropriate respirator instructions and seal.

f. Clean respirators shall be stored and protected against dust, dirt, sunlight, heat, extreme cold, excessive moisture, or damaging chemicals.

9. RESPIRATOR USERS: Respirator users will log and file the Name, Respirator Type and Cartridge/Filter.

a. Cartridges for gas and vapors will be NIOSH/MSHA approved for the specific respirator. Approval number will begin with TC-23C-\_\_\_.

b. Filters for dusts, fumes and mists will be NIOSH/MSHA approved for the specific respirator. Approval number will begin with TC-21C-\_\_\_.