Knowledge Centre

The importance of respiratory protection

Wearing respiratory protection may seem inconvenient, but airborne particles and contaminants – no matter how small – can cause both short-term and long-term health problems if proper use and care of respiratory protection equipment is not exercised.

Respirators protect employees from areas with insufficient oxygen, harmful dusts, fogs, smokes, mists, gases, vapours and sprays. These hazards may cause cancer, lung impairment, other diseases or death. Always wear respiratory protection where required at the workplace.

Current legislation

Amended Standard EN 149:2001+A1:2009 EN 149:2001 was superseded by an amended version, EN 149:2001+A1:2009 (EN149+A1) in July 2009.

Changes included the introduction of two usability classifications for disposable respirators; single shift only devices non-reusable (shown through marking "NR") and reusable devices (marked 'R').

Current European Standards Explained

EN 149:2001+A1:2009 states that all reusable devices (marked 'R') must withstand being cleaned and disinfected using a method provided by the manufacturer. This change, along with new performance requirements, is intended to give the user further confidence in respirators providing continuous respiratory protection in hazardous environments. All particle filtering half masks featured fully conform to EN 149:2001+A1:2009.
Disposable respirators that have passed the optional Dolomite clogging test have a suffix.

Selecting The Right Protection For The Job In 4 Easy Steps

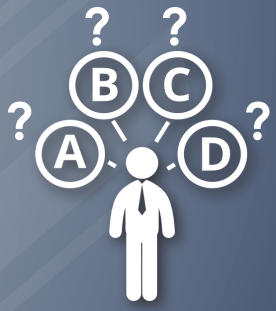
IDENTIFY THE HAZARD
Dust, mists, metal fumes, gases or vapour.

ASSESS THE HAZARD
Assess the hazard level/other protection – skin and eye

A B C

SELECT THE RIGHT RESPIRATOR
Disposable, half mask, full face, powered, airline.

TRAINING IN FITTING AND USE
Being trained on how to use and maintain the equipment to achieve optimum performance



Types Of Hazards

DUST	Produced when solid materials are broken down into finer particles, the longer the dust remains in the air the easier it is to inhale.
MISTS	Tiny liquid droplets formed by atomisation and condensation processes such as spraying. Mists are often combinations of several hazardous ingredients.
METAL FUMES	Occur when metals are vaporised under high heat. The vapour is cooled quickly and condenses into very fine particles that float in the air.
GASSES	Airborne at room temperature. Able to diffuse or spread freely, can travel very far very quickly
VAPOURS	Gaseous state of substances that are liquids or solids at room temperature. Formed when substances evaporate in the way water vapour evaporates from water.

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Types Of Respiratory Protection

Types of Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)

Each type of RPE has specific limitations which dictate the types of application for which it may be used. RPE is tested to relevant European Standards which determines the product performance.

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PARTICULATE — NEGATIVE PRESSURE — maintenance-free & reusable

GAS & VAPOUR — NEGATIVE PRESSURE — maintenance-free & reusable

POWERED — POSITIVE PRESSURE — SUPPLIED AIR RESPIRATORS

AIRLINE — POSITIVE PRESSURE — SUPPLIED AIR RESPIRATORS

RESPIRATORY PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Filter Markings Guide

FILTER MARKINGS			
For use against	Filter type	Colour code	
Gas & Vapour EN14387 & EN405)	**A**	**Brown**	Organic Vapours with boiling point greater than 65°C and good warning properties
	B	Grey	Inorganic gasses and vapours, e.g. Chlorine (not Carbon Monoxide)
	E	Yellow	Acid gases and vapours, e.g. Sulphur Dioxide, Hydrogen Chloride
	K	Green	Ammonia and organic ammonia derivatives
	P	White	Particulate
	AX	**Brown**	Certain organic compounds with boiling points less than 65°C & good warning properties
Particles (EN149 & EN149)	P1	White	Protection against particulates
	P2	White	Protection against particulates
	P3	White	Protection against particulates

Face Fit Testing

Where RPE is used, it must be able to provide adequate protection for individual wearers. RPE can't protect the wearer if it leaks. A major cause of leaks is poor fit – tight-fitting facepieces need to fit the wearer's face to be effective.
As people come in all sorts of shapes and sizes it is unlikely that one particular type or size of RPE facepiece will fit everyone. Fit testing will ensure that the equipment selected is suitable for the wearer.

What Do You Need To Do

The best time to do fit testing is at the initial selection stage, when individual users can be given a choice of adequate models of RPE

How To Do It

We have access to a range of highly experienced and qualified professionals to conduct this service for you. They will carry out extensive assessments to ensure the correct fitting is achieved to ensure the maximum protection for the user.

Contact Us Today For More Information