Respiratory Protection Program



This Model Policy is based on Ontario OHS requirements but can be adapted for any other jurisdiction.

1. **PURPOSE**

ABC Company has adopted this Respiratory Protection Program Policy to ensure that effective respiratory protection is provided to all workers exposed to airborne hazards at its workplaces in accordance with the Ontario *Occupational Health and Safety Act* ("Act"), Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Regulation O. Reg. 185/19, *Control of Exposure to Biological or Chemical Agents* ("Regulation") and other applicable regulations, requirements and standards, as well as the technical respiratory safety specifications set out in the ABC Company Occupational Health and Safety Program ("OHS Program").

2. **POLICY**

Certain operations at ABC Company worksites may expose workers to one or more hazardous biological or chemical agents. ABC Company will take all measures reasonably necessary in the circumstances to ensure exposure to these agents remains at safe and acceptable limits. ABC Company will seek to accomplish this goal using methods that *do not* require exposed workers to use a respirator. If use of a respirator cannot be avoided, ABC Company will furnish the equipment and implement the measures set out in this Policy to ensure it is properly

selected, used, fitted, maintained, serviced and stored, and that workers required to use respirators receive the necessary training to do so safely and effectively.

3. **DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of this Policy:

“airline respirator” means a respirator and air supply hose with a hood or helmet, a tight-fitting facepiece, or a loose-fitting facepiece or visor, that is supplied with compressed breathing air from a compressed breathing air system;

“air-purifying respirator” means a respirator with an air-purifying filter, cartridge or canister that removes specific air contaminants by passing ambient air through the air-purifying element;

“assigned protection factor” means the anticipated level of respiratory protection that would be provided by a properly functioning respirator or class of respirators to properly fitted and trained users;

“CSA Standard” means Standard CAN/CSA-Z180.1-13 (R2018), *Compressed Breathing Air and Systems,* (2018);

“exposure” means exposure by inhalation, ingestion, skin absorption or skin contact;

“HEPA filter” means a high efficiency particulate air filter that is at least 99.97% efficient in removing from the air particles with a mean aerodynamic diameter of 0.3 micrometres;

“IDLH atmosphere” means an atmosphere that poses an immediate threat to life or that will cause irreversible adverse health effects or impair a worker’s ability to escape from the environment;

“maximum use concentration” means the maximum concentration of an airborne biological or chemical agent that a respirator can

be expected to protect a worker using the respirator from, as determined by multiplying the assigned protection factor set out for the respirator in Schedule 2 of the Regulation, or, if applicable, the simulated workplace protection factor for the respirator, by the occupational exposure limit set out for the substance in the Ontario Table or in the ACGIH Table;

“NIOSH” means the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health;

“powered air-purifying respirator” means an air-purifying respirator that, by means of a powered blower worn by the user, passes ambient air through an air-purifying element and then supplies purified air to a helmet, hood, facepiece or visor worn by the user;

“qualitative fit test” means a qualitative fit test method set out in Annex B of CAN/CSA-Z94.4-18, *Selection, Use and Care of Respirators* (September 2018);

“quantitative fit test” means a quantitative fit test method set out in Annex C of CSA-Z94.4-18, *Selection, Use and Care of Respirators* (September 2018);

“self-contained breathing apparatus” means a respirator that has a portable supply of breathing gas that is independent of the ambient atmosphere;

“SWPF” or “simulated workplace protection factor” means a surrogate measure of the workplace protection provided by a respirator, as determined in a controlled laboratory setting that simulates a workplace setting;

“tight-fitting” means designed to form a complete seal with the user’s face or neck.

4. **SCOPE OF POLICY**

4.1 What This Policy Covers

This Policy is intended to cover situations where ABC Company requires workers exposed to chemical and biological agents to use respirators in accordance with the Regulation; it is not intended to cover use of respirators for exposure to designated substances addressed in separate OHS regulations, including:

- A chemical agent listed in Table 1 of Ontario Regulation 490/09, *Designated Substances*; nor
- Asbestos in a workplace subject to Ontario Regulation 278/05, *Designated Substance – Asbestos on Construction Projects and in Buildings and Repair Operations*.

In the event workers are exposed to any of the designated substances subject to the above regulations, ABC Company will create and implement a separate respiratory protection policy and respiratory protection program in accordance with the requirements of those regulations.

4.2 Workers This Policy Protects

The intent of this Policy is to ensure that **all workers** engaged to work at ABC Company work sites who are required to wear respirators are properly protected regardless of who pays or employs those workers, including:

- Full- or part-time workers employed by ABC Company;
- Temporary employees placed by an outside agency to work at the site;
- Contract labourers engaged to perform work at the site;
- Volunteers who work at the site for free; and
- Workers employed by constructors, contractors, and subcontractors to perform work at the site under a contract with ABC Company.

5. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. ABC Company

ABC Company owners, corporate officers and directors, upper managers, and other representatives who may be considered an "employer" under the Act will oversee this Policy and ensure it is effectively implemented and that:

- The resources necessary to implement this Policy effectively are provided;
- All ABC Company work sites under its control are assessed for potential respiratory hazards before work is conducted in accordance with the OHS Program;
- Appropriate measures are selected to eliminate and control identified respiratory hazards in accordance with this Policy and the OHS Program;
- The respiratory protective equipment workers are required to use is furnished to workers at no expense to themselves;
- Workers are allowed to participate in respiratory hazard assessment and the selection of respiratory protective equipment either directly or through their workplace Joint Safety and Health Committee ("JHSC") or Health and Safety Representative ("Safety Rep");
- Workers exposed to respiratory hazards receive the necessary safety information, training, and supervision in proper use, limitations, inspection, maintenance, and storage of such equipment;
- This Policy is applied to constructors, contractors, and subcontractors hired to work requiring use of respirators at ABC Company work sites;
- This Policy is appropriately reviewed.

5.2. Safety Coordinator, Site Manager

The Safety Coordinator, facility manager, or other person designated as being in charge of safety at the site will be thoroughly familiar with and oversee implementation of this Policy, including ensuring that:

- The work site is assessed for potential respiratory

hazards before work is conducted in accordance with the OHS Program;
- Appropriate measures are selected to eliminate and control identified respiratory hazards in accordance with this Policy and the OHS Program;
- The respiratory protective equipment workers are required to use is furnished to workers at no expense to themselves;
- Workers are allowed to participate in respiratory hazard assessment and the selection of respiratory protective equipment either directly or through their JHSC or Safety Rep;
- Safe work procedures for use of respirators are developed and implemented;
- Workers exposed to respiratory hazards receive the necessary safety information, training, and supervision in proper use, limitations, inspection, maintenance, and storage of such equipment;
- This Policy is applied to constructors, contractors, and subcontractors hired to work requiring use of respirators at ABC Company work sites;
- This Policy is appropriately reviewed.

5.3. Supervisors

Supervisors, lead-hands, foremen, and other persons in charge of work operations requiring use of respiratory protective equipment are responsible for day-to-day implementation of this Policy and applying it in actual operations, including ensuring:

- The work site is assessed for potential respiratory hazards before work is conducted in accordance with the OHS Program;
- All workers are furnished and required to use the respiratory protective equipment required by this Policy, including but not limited to air-supplying respirators for working in IDLH and oxygen deficient

atmospheres;
- All respirators meet the requirements of the standards set forth in the Regulation and this Policy;
- Workers exposed to respiratory hazards receive the necessary safety information, training and supervision in proper use, limitations, inspection, maintenance and storage of such equipment;
- All safe work procedures for use of respiratory protective equipment are carried out;
- This Policy is consistently enforced, including where necessary, via the imposition of discipline against workers who commit infractions;
- This Policy is applied to constructors, contractors and subcontractors hired to carry out work operations requiring respirator use at ABC Company work sites;
- This Policy is appropriately reviewed.

5.4. Workers

Workers that perform work operations requiring use of respirators will cooperate with ABC Company in implementing this Policy, including by:

- Ensuring they receive, understand, and apply the respirator safety information and training they receive, including:
    - What respiratory hazards they’re exposed to;
    - The respirators they are required to use, how it works, and what its limitations are;
    - The proper use, cleaning, disinfection, maintenance and storage of their respirators;
    - How the respirator should fit and what to do to ensure a proper fit prior to each use;
    - How to inspect their respirator prior to each use;
- Properly using, inspecting, storing, and caring for their respirators they are required to use;
- Ensuring their respirator fits properly;
- Following all safe work procedures that apply to the

work;
- Where necessary, shaving to ensure that the facial seal required for the face mask of their respirator to their skin is effected;
- Immediately reporting any respiratory hazards or respirator defects to their supervisor; and
- Participating in the identification, assessment, and control of respiratory hazards either directly or via their JHSC or Safety Rep.

5.5. Safety Committee/Safety Representative

The JHSC or Safety Rep may be called on to:

- Participate in the airborne testing and hazard assessment required by this Policy and the OHS Program;
- Provide input into the selection of respiratory protective equipment appropriate to protect workers from risks identified in the hazard assessment;
- Provide input into the development of safe work procedures necessary to perform work involving exposure to respiratory hazards safely;
- Consider the effectiveness of respirators as part of its routine monthly workplace inspection;
- Issue recommendations for improving respiratory protection;
- Participate in the investigation of injuries, illnesses, incidents, or accidents involving respiratory hazards;
- Participate in the review of this Policy.

5.6. Visitors

Visitors to ABC Company workplaces will:

- Stay away from areas of the work site where respiratory hazards exist unless they:
    - Are authorized to be in those areas;
    - Follow all applicable safe work procedures while in those areas;

        - Use all required respiratory protection equipment;
    - Refrain from engaging in any conduct that distracts or interferes with the implementation of the procedures and protections set out in this Policy and the OHS Program;
    - Comply with the terms of the ABC Company Visitors' Safety Policy.

6. **HAZARD IDENTIFICATION & ASSESSMENT**

ABC Company will ensure that competent personnel perform all procedures for monitoring, sampling and determining airborne concentrations of and workers' exposure to a biological or chemical agent required in the Regulation following the methods and procedures listed in the OHS Program.

7. **METHODS OF CONTROLLING RESPIRATORY HAZARDS**

Where it is determined that workers are or may be exposed to a biological or chemical agent, ABC will take all take all measures reasonably necessary in the circumstances to keep exposure within the limits set out in Section 4 of the Regulation for the particular agent. In selecting the methods to accomplish this objective, ABC Company will be guided by the following principles:

- If reasonable and practical, ABC Company will substitute the hazardous biological or chemical agent with an alternative that is less hazardous;
- If substitution is not reasonable or not practical, ABC Company will seek to eliminate the hazards by implementing mechanical ventilation or other engineering controls required by the Regulation;
- ABC Company will require workers to use respirators only if the required engineering controls:
    - Don't exist or can't be obtained;
    - Aren't reasonable or practical to adopt due to the duration or frequency of the exposures or nature of the work;
    - Are in place but are rendered ineffective due to a

temporary breakdown of the controls; or
- Are ineffective to prevent, control or limit exposure because of an emergency.

8. **SELECTION OF RESPIRATORS**

8.1 General Selection Criteria

Where it is necessary for workers to use respirators, ABC Company will furnish the equipment at its sole expense and ensure that the respirator is appropriate for the form and concentration of the airborne biological or chemical agent(s) to which the user is exposed, calculated in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 1 of the Regulation and the respirator's maximum use concentration. In making the above determination for respirator selection, ABC Company will consider:

- The information provided by the respirator's manufacturer with regard to the respirator's intended use, scope and limitations; and
- The potential for:
  - An atmosphere with an oxygen concentration of less than 19.5%;
  - An IDLH atmosphere; and
  - Oil in the atmosphere.

8.2 General Standards for Respirators

Respirators must:

- Be approved by NIOSH or another testing and certification agency and, in the opinion of a person qualified because of knowledge, training and experience in industrial hygiene practice, afford equal or greater protection than that afforded by the use of a NIOSH-approved respirator approved by NIOSH; and
- Meet or exceed the assigned protection factor for the particular type of respirator set out in Schedule 2 of the Regulation:

SCHEDULE 2: ASSIGNED PROTECTION FACTOR FOR RESPIRATORS

Type of Respirator	Assigned Protection Factor
Air-Purifying Respirator – filtering-facepiece	10
Air-Purifying Respirator – half-facepiece	10
Air- Purifying Respirator – full-facepiece	50
Powered Air-Purifying Respirator – half-facepiece	50
Powered Air-Purifying Respirator – full-facepiece	1,000
Powered Air-Purifying Respirator – helmet/hood	25 1,000 if supported by an SWPF study
Powered Air-Purifying Respirator – loose-fitting facepiece/visor	25
Airline Respirator – continuous- flow half-facepiece	50
Airline Respirator – continuous- flow full-facepiece	1,000
Airline Respirator – continuous-flow helmet/hood	25 1,000 if supported by an SWPF study
Airline Respirator – continuous-flow loose-fitting facepiece/visor	25

Airline Respirator – pressure-demand half-facepiece	50
Airline Respirator – pressure–demand full-facepiece	1,000
Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) – pressure-demand full-facepiece	10,000
Multi-functional SCBA/Airline Respirator	10,000

8.3 Standards for Respirators Protecting against Asbestos Exposure

Respirators used to protect against exposure to asbestos must be equipped with either:

- A HEPA filter; or
- N-100, P-100 or R-100 particulate filter.

8.4 Standards for Airline Respirators in IDLH Atmospheres

Airline respirators used in an IDLH atmosphere must be fitted with an auxiliary supply of breathing air that’s sufficient to enable a worker to escape from the atmosphere without help.

8.5 Standards for Supplied Air Respirators

If a respirator is supplied with breathing air from an air cylinder or compressed breathing air system, the following standards must be met:

- The breathing air must meet the purity requirements listed in Table 1 of the CSA Standard.
- If a compressed breathing air system uses a compressor with an operating pressure greater than 103.4 kPa to

supply the breathing air, the breathing air must be tested to ensure that it meets the purity requirements listed in Table 1 of the CSA Standard;.

- The air intake used in connection with a compressed breathing air system must:
    - For breathing air from a compressor with an operating pressure greater than 103.4 kPa, be located as required by the CSA Standard, specifically Section 6 (Air intakes) and Annex A;
    - For breathing air from an ambient air system, be located as required by the CSA Standard, specifically Section 6 (Air intakes) and Annex B.

If a compressed breathing air system uses an oil-lubricated compressor to supply breathing air, the following standards must be met:

- A continuous carbon monoxide monitor equipped with audible and visual alarms that go off at 5 ppm must be provided; and
- That continuous carbon monoxide monitor must be calibrated in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

9. **PROPER RESPIRATOR USE**

No worker may be assigned to an operation that requires use of a respirator unless that worker is physically able to perform that operation while using the respirator. Workers will be medically evaluated in accordance with the procedures listed in the OHS Program. Workers who are required to use respirators must use them in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions and comply with the procedures set forth by ABC Company in the OHS Program to ensure safe respirator use, including but not limited to procedures for:

- Inspecting their respirators before each use;
- Where workers are required to wear respirators with tight-fitting face masks, performing a seal check before

each use;
- Not sporting facial hair or anything else that may compromise the fit of their tight-fitting respirator;
- Working in and evacuating IDLH atmospheres;
- Cleaning, disinfecting, maintaining and storing their respirator.

10. **TIGHT-FITTING RESPIRATORS**

10.1 Fit Testing

Respirators that require an effective seal with the face for proper functioning may not be issued or used unless a qualitative or quantitative fit test is carried out and demonstrates that the facepiece forms an effective seal with the worker's face. Fit tests must be carried out:

- Before a worker uses the respirator for the first time;
- Whenever there is a change in respirator facepiece, including the brand, model, and size;
- Whenever changes to the worker's physical condition could affect how the respirator fits; and
- At least once a year.

During fit testing, workers must wear the glasses or any other PPE that they'll be wearing when using the respirator and which could interfere with the respirator's fit.

10.2 Face Seal

Except for specialty eyewear approved for use with positive pressure full facepiece respirators, nothing is permitted which comes between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face, or which interferes with the functioning of the respirator. Workers required to use a respirator which requires an effective seal with the face for proper functioning must be clean shaven where the respirator seals with the face.

10.3 Seal Checks

Workers must conduct positive and negative pressure user seal checks before each use of a tight-fitting elastrometric respirator.

11. **INSPECTION & MAINTENANCE**

Respirators must be cared for, inspected and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.

12. **TRAINING & INSTRUCTION**

When workers first receive their respirators and before they use it for the first time, ABC Company will provide them training and instruction on the proper use and care of the respirator. Such training and instruction will include, at a minimum:

- How the respirator works to protect them and what its limitations are;
- How to inspect and maintain the respirator, including, in the case of an air-purifying respirator, end of service life indications or change out schedules for the cartridge, cannister or filter;
- Proper fitting of the respirator; and
- Cleaning and disinfecting the respirator.

Workers may not use their respirators for the first time unless and until they demonstrate that they understood and are capable of applying their training and instruction, for example, by demonstrating how to inspect the respirator and verify a proper fit.

13. **RECORDS**

ABC Company will keep written records of the measures provided for under this Policy and the OHS Program, including with regard to:

- Airborne testing, hazard assessments and determination of exposure levels;

- Respirator selection;
- Safety training and instruction;
- Fit testing;
- Medical evaluation of workers required to use respirators;
- Respirator inspection, maintainenance, repair and storage; and
- OHS Program monitoring.

14. **CONSTRUCTORS, CONTRACTORS & SUBCONTRACTORS**

Where work performed at ABC Company worksites by constructors, contractors and/or subcontractors requires workers to use respirators, ABC Company will, before such work begins, take the following measures to ensure the safety of the workers of those constructors, contractor and/or subcontractors, as the case may be, and the coordination of respiratory safety measures on the site:

- Notify the constructor, contractor and/or subcontractor about the respiratory hazards at the site, the dangers they pose, and the respiratory protective equipment and other controls used by ABC Company to protect workers exposed to them; and
- Give the constructor, contractor and/or subcontractor a copy of this Policy and the OHS Program.

Constructors in control of construction projects at an ABC Company site that require workers to use respirators must ensure that those workers are adequately protected by applying either:

- This Policy and the OHS Program; or
- An equivalent policy and respiratory protection program that meet the requirements of the Regulation and other applicable laws, regulations and standards, and that is coordinated with and provides at least the same level of protection as this Policy and the OHS Program to workers required to use respirators.

15. **POLICY REVIEW**

This Policy will be reviewed, in consultation with the workplace JHSC or Safety Rep, at least once a year and more often in response to incidents, injuries, illnesses, changes to work conditions, and other developments suggesting the current Policy may no longer be suited to current work conditions.