Ontario Compliance Alert: New Respiratory Protection Rules Take Effect Jan. 1, 2020



The New Respiratory Protection Requirements

The Ontario MOL just finalized changes to OHS laws that require employers to protect workers from exposure to hazardous biological and chemical agents and other airborne hazards. You need to review your current respiratory protection hazard policies and programs now to ensure compliance when the changes take effect on January 1, 2020. Here's a quick list of the 10 things you'll need to do. Go to OHS Insider for more resources to help you make the transition to the new rules, including:

- A Compliance Briefing that explains each change and what to do to comply with it; and
- A Model Respiratory Protection Policy incorporating the changes that you can adapt for your own workplace.

The 10 Things You'll Need to Do

Starting January 1, 2020, employers in Ontario will have to:

1. Use the revised formula and OELs to calculate workers' exposure to designated substances and biological and chemical agents.
2. Use the so-called Quebec Model to calculate exposure of workers that work irregular shifts.

3. Follow the revised hierarchy of controls in deciding how to control the respiratory hazards they identify.
4. Not require workers to use respirators without first considering whether it’s reasonable or practical to substitute the hazardous agents with safer alternatives.
5. Select respirators that meet the new assigned protections factor standards.
6. Ensure supplied air and other types of respirators for especially dangerous atmospheres meet newly specified standards.
7. Create and implement a respiratory protection program if they require workers to use respirators.
8. Meet new fit testing requirements for tight-fitting respirators.
9. Ensure that workers that use respirators are receiving the training and instruction the new rules require.
10. Use the newly consolidated medical surveillance code to monitor the medical condition of workers exposed to designated substances, regardless of which designated substance that is.