

Form for Voluntary Respirator Use

Massachusetts Institute of Technology - Environment, Health, and Safety Office

(Last Update: June 2010)

Some MIT employees, students, or affiliates may chose to use filtering facepiece respirators, also referred to as N95 or N99 disposable dust masks, on a voluntary basis during activities that involve exposures to low-level, non-hazardous nuisance dust or other similar particulate. According to the MIT Respiratory Protection Program and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations, MIT must provide you with the following information if you wear a filtering facepiece respirator voluntarily. The following information is copied from the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard and pertains to the voluntary use of respirators. After reading the information below, please complete the section at the end of this form.

29 CFR 1910.134, Appendix D - (Mandatory) Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the Standard

Respirators are an effective method of protection against designated hazards when properly selected and worn. Respirator use is encouraged, even when exposures are below the exposure limit, to provide an additional level of comfort and protection for workers. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. Sometimes, workers may wear respirators to avoid exposures to hazards, even if the amount of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by OSHA standards. If your employer provides respirators for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own respirator, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard.

You should do the following:

1. Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirators limitations.
2. Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.
3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases, vapors, or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke.
4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.

The filtering facepiece respirator you have elected to use is approved, when fitted properly, for use against nuisance non-hazardous particulate (e.g., fiberglass, sheet rock dust, sawdust, dirt, pollen, animal dander). It will not provide protection from any chemical vapors such as those associated with spray paints or solvents. It is not intended for use during work that may involve exposure to airborne asbestos fibers, silica dust, or lead dust. Work you perform that may involve airborne asbestos fibers, silica dust, or lead dust should be reviewed by EHS before the project proceeds. If you have questions concerning any of this information, please call EHS at 2-3477.

Please complete the section below:

Name (print): _____ Job Classification _____

Department: _____ PI/Supervisor: _____ Location of use: _____

Reason for using dust mask (describe nature of work, specific location, and type of dust):

I have read and understood the information provided above: _____
(signature & date)