Respiratory Protection Program

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Issue No. 5
Reviewer: Director, Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management
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Review Date: 03/16

01. POLICY STATEMENT

01.01 This PPS establishes policies and procedures for the Respiratory Protection Program.

02. GENERAL

02.01 Texas State University considers the safety and health of its employees to be of utmost importance. Reflecting this concern, the university will enforce these proactive standards to ensure the protection of all employees from hazards through the proper use of respirators. Respirators shall be used where engineering controls of respiratory hazards are not feasible, while engineering controls are being installed or in emergencies.

02.02 This policy shall be used in conjunction with other pertinent university policies, such as the Lockout/Tagout, Asbestos Abatement and Confined Space Entry Programs.

02.03 Only state and licensed asbestos workers are allowed to disturb asbestos containing material. University employees are subject to the respiratory protection program printed in the Texas State Asbestos Abatement Policy.

02.04 The 29 CFR 1910.134 OSHA Respiratory Protection Standards was used as a reference in the development of the Texas State Respiratory Protection Program; additional references are as follows:

- 40 CFR 260 through 268 EPA Hazardous Waste
- 30 TAC §355 TCEQ TAC 30 355 TNRCC Hazardous Waste
- 25 TAC §295 DSHS Hazard Communication TAC 25 TDH Hazard Communication Act
- 25 TAC §295 DSHS Texas Asbestos Health Protection TAC 25 Asbestos Abatement
- NFPA Halon Extinguisher Fire Suppression Systems
- ANSI Z88.2-1969 Respiratory Protection
- CGA CS G-7.1-1966 Grade D Breathing Air
- NIOSH Pocket Guide to Chemical Hazards
03. RESPONSIBILITY

03.01 The Director, Environmental Health, Safety and Risk Management (EHS&RM) is responsible for coordinating respirator training and conducting periodic physical exams, fit tests, and record keeping.

03.02 The Supervisors of respirator users affected by this policy are responsible to ensure that the following procedures are followed:

a. proper maintenance of respirators;
b. proper storage of respirators;
c. maintain an adequate inventory of appropriate respirator filters for shop employees;
d. program compliance by shop employees.

03.03 The individual respirator user must take responsibility for his/her own safety and make a firm commitment to follow the procedures of the Texas State Respiratory Protection Program.

03.04 Texas State expressly authorizes supervisor to halt any work project where there is danger of serious personal injury. This policy includes respiratory hazards.

04. PROGRAM ELEMENTS

04.01 The Director, EHS&RM will develop detailed written standards operating procedures governing the selection and use of respirators. These detailed procedures will be included as part of this respiratory protection program.

04.02 Respirators, filters and cartridges will be selected on the basis of workplace hazards to which the worker is exposed. All selections will be made by the individual shop supervisor overseeing the respirator user.

04.03 The respirator user will be instructed and trained in the proper use of respirators and their limitations. Both workers and supervisors will be so instructed by the Director, EHS&RM or his/her designate. Training will provide the employee an opportunity to handle the respirator. During fit testing, every respirator user will receive fitting instructions, including demonstrations and practice in how the respirator should be donned and worn, how to adjust it, and how to determine if it fits properly. Respirators should not be worn when conditions prevent a good face seal. Such conditions may be a growth of facial hair, a cap that projects under the facepiece or temple pieces on eyeglasses. Also, the absence of one or both dentures can seriously affect the fit of a facepiece. University employees who are required to use respirators and choose to wear facial hair which prevents a proper face seal, will be required to sign a respirator waiver form which relieves the university of all responsibility in the event of the employee’s injury or death.
due to a respiratory hazard. (Respiratory Waiver Form) Anyone who refuses to sign a waiver form or to shave will be referred to their supervisor for disciplinary action. To assure proper protection, the facepiece fit will be checked by the respirator user each time the user puts on the respirator. This will be done by following the manufacturer’s facepiece-fitting instructions.

04.04 Types of respirators to be used:

a. Where practical, half-face or full-face air purifying respirators will be assigned to individual workers for their exclusive use. Respirators will be marked as a means of identification within the individual shop when they are assigned to employees.
b. Only NIOSH certified respirators will be used.

04.05 Care of Respirators

Respirators will be regularly cleaned and disinfected. Those issued for the exclusive use of one worker will be cleaned after each day’s use, or more often if necessary. Shared respirators will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected after each use. The individual shop supervisors will see that supplies are provided for cleaning and maintenance and that written cleaning instructions are available. Respirators used routinely will be inspected during cleaning. Worn or deteriorated parts will be replaced.

There will be regular inspection and evaluation to determine the continued effectiveness of the program. The supervisor/manager will make frequent inspections of all areas where respirators are used to ensure compliance with the respiratory protection program.

04.06 Selection of Respirator

Respirators shall be selected on the basis of respiratory hazards to which the worker is exposed. No single respirator type or filter type will cover every requirement. Each department requiring the use of a respirator is required to display a wall chart showing which filter type for the specific respirator brand that individual department uses shall be used for the appropriate hazard. The typical hazards, types of respirators and filters are listed. (See Respirator Use)

Only NIOSH approved respirators and supplies will be used. Instruction sheets and packaging should be provided by the manufacturer.

04.07 Fit testing

Employees will perform both positive and negative fit checks every time the respirator is donned to make sure the face-to-mask seal is airtight and that the respirator is working.
04.08 Persons will not be assigned to tasks requiring use of respirators unless it has been determined that they are physically able to perform the work and use the equipment. The Texas State Department of Respiratory Care or a contracted medical care facility will determine what health and physical conditions are pertinent. The respirator user's medical status will be reviewed periodically as determined by the Director, EHS&RM.

05. SURVEILLANCE OF THE WORK AREA

05.01 Once the respiratory protection program is in place, employees must continue to monitor all workplaces when the possibility of respiratory hazards such as oxygen deficient atmospheres exist. This ongoing testing ensures that exposure levels have not risen above the protection capabilities of their respirators.

06. INSPECTION AND EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

06.01 Every third year, the entire Texas State respiratory protection program shall receive a thorough review by the Director, EHS&RM to determine the programs effectiveness. The following areas will be assessed:

   a. worker acceptance and uses of respirators

   b. verify that the program procedures are being followed

06.02 The Director, EHS&RM will work closely with the supervisor and respirator users to document any problems identified and follow them up with an investigation to determine why proper respiratory protection procedures were not used. Corrective action will be taken immediately to preserve the health and safety of respirator users.

07. WORKER TRAINING

07.01 All university employees who are required to use respirators shall be given adequate training by a qualified person to ensure the proper use of respirators. If there is ever any doubt about any aspect of training, the Director, EHS&RM or shop supervisor shall be notified and the matter clarified.

07.02 At a minimum, the employee needs to know the following information before using a respirator: how to inspect, don, and check the fit/seal of a respirator. In addition, they need to know about the proper use and the limitations of the respirator.

07.03 All respirator users shall receive refresher training on an annual basis, which shall be recorded by the user’s supervisor. Copies of training records shall be provided to the EHS&RM office.
08. RESPIRATOR ASSIGNMENT

08.01 The Director, ESH&RM shall maintain copies on the issuance of respirators to university employees. He/she shall record the date of initial issue. (See Respirator Distribution Form) The shop supervisor or respirator users shall be responsible for maintaining an ample supply of filters. Respirator cartridges are not interchangeable between brands. Each brand of respirator must be used with that same brand of cartridges/filters. Workers should use only the respirator and cartridges/filters assigned to them.

09. RESPIRATOR CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

09.01 Take off the cartridges, filters, headbands, and filter holders. Completely disassemble respirator.

09.02 Wash the facepiece in soapy water or in the solution the manufacturer recommends. Follow with a disinfecting rinse.

09.03 Rinse in warm water and let the facepiece air dry on shelf or countertop. Do not hang the respirator-this could cause distortion of the facepiece which would prevent face-to-facepiece seals in the future.

10. RESPIRATOR STORAGE

10.01 Store respirators in a clean, sanitary and moderate temperature environment away from dust, sunlight, heat, extreme cold, excessive moisture or damaging chemicals. Place the respirator and cartridges in a sealed container or zip-lock storage bag.

10.02 Do not hang the facepiece by the headbands or place it in any position that may cause distortion which may lead to a damaged face-to-mask seal.

11. RESPIRATOR INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE

11.01 Respirators used routinely shall be inspected during cleaning. Worn or deteriorated parts shall be replaced. When inspecting a respirator, take it apart and check all the valves and seals for dirt or grit - anything that may cause a leak. Check all the parts for wear or damage, paying special attention to rubber or plastic parts which can deteriorate. Replace any worn or damaged parts right away.

11.02 Maintenance

If during a routine inspection or a user notices that something is wrong with a respirator, repairs must be made immediately or a replacement respirator must be
provided. Repairs must be made only by trained personnel using parts specifically designed for the particular brand or type of respirator. It is the individual user's responsibility to clean, inspect, and monitor his/her respirator and to inform the supervisor if parts or the entire respirator needs to be replaced.

12. MEDICAL SURVEILLANCE

12.01 Persons shall not be assigned to tasks requiring the use of respirators unless it has been determined that they are physically able to perform the work and use the equipment. A medical professional in the Department of Respiratory Care or contracted medical authority shall determine what health and physical conditions are pertinent.

12.02 The initial medical examination will consist of:

a. Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire (Respirator Regulations) shall be considered confidential and this form will include the following information:
   1) History of personal respiratory disease – Identifies workers with a history of asthma, emphysema, or chronic lung disease.
   2) Work history – Identifies workers who have been exposed to asbestos, silica, cotton dust, beryllium, etc. within the past ten years or workers who have worked in occupations or industries where such exposure was probable.
   3) Any other medical information – Such information may offer evidence of the worker’s ability or inability to wear and use respirators.

b. Respirator fit test. One of the following types of fit tests will be performed on a yearly basis:
   1) Qualitative Fit test – A respirator user is exposed to a harmless irritant smoke or odorous vapor while performing exercises similar to workplace functions that could cause facepiece leakage.
   2) Quantitative Fit Test – measures the contamination inside the test atmosphere and inside the respirator itself.

12.03 On-going Medical Status Checks

An annual Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire and Fit Test should be performed on members of the Paint and Steam Shops. Employees of all other Facilities Shops and any other respirator users will undergo the above described Respirator Medical Evaluation Questionnaire every third year. It is the responsibility of the individual respirator user to inform his/her supervisor that a significant change in medical status may have occurred that may affect his/her ability to use or wear the respirator. At this time, the employee will be directed to his/her personal physician for a determination of whether the employee should continue to use a respirator. A medical professional in the Department of Respiratory Care or contracted medical treatment facility may review such medical determinations if needed.
13. **MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PPS**

Major responsibilities for routine assignments associated with this PPS include the following:

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14. **CERTIFICATION OF STATEMENT**

This FSS/PPS has been approved by the following individuals in their official capacities, and represents FSS policy and procedure from the date of this document until superseded.

Director, EHS&RM, Reviewer

Associate Vice President, Facilities, Reviewer

Vice President for Finance and Support Services

Approved: ___________________________
Reviewer

Approved: ___________________________
Reviewer

Approved: ___________________________
Vice President for Finance and Support Services