

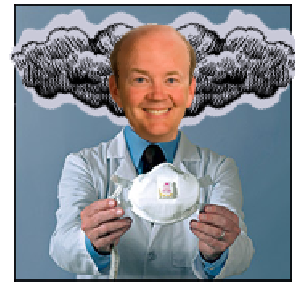


Your One-Stop Respirator Information Shop

Brian D. Harrison MD

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Respirator manufacturers and safety equipment vendors can be great sources of knowledge. But an employer who purchases their products may also want to cross-reference non-commercial resources. This is one of the many ways the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), a division of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), assists business.



NIOSH has just released a Respirator Trusted-Source Information Page, with plenty of useful information on it in the form of text, photos, and tables. Consider this a reliable public resource to identify NIOSH-approved respirators, how to obtain products, and how to use them. The page will be dynamic, and information will be added as it becomes available. Content will address each of the sections listed below:

- Section 1: NIOSH-Approved Respirators – What are they, How can they be identified, Where can I get them? Understanding the types of respirators; Identifying NIOSH-approved products; and Outlets for purchasing products
- Section 2: Use of NIOSH-Approved Respirators - How to implement the use of respirators in the workplace and use them appropriately.
- Section 3: Ancillary Respirator Information - Commonly asked Questions and Answers (Fact Sheets), Respirator Myths, Science of Respirator Function and Performance, Respiratory Protective Devices Not Approved by NIOSH

The Respirator Trusted-Source Information Page may be viewed at:

www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp_part/RespSource.html

And, a cost-saving tip today from out of the Box: when seeking the periodic medical approval that OSHA requires your employees have before using a respirator, start with a questionnaire, rather than a full exam. Your local Occupational Health Clinic should give you the money-saving option of reviewing questionnaires from your employees, and then notifying you which employees can be approved with that information alone. Only employees who need full medical evaluation would then be given an appointment. Do this by distributing the OSHA Mandatory Medical Questionnaire to your employees:

http://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=978

But, pre-fill it with the required information about work conditions and the respirator itself ("respirator usage."). The place for that information is Part B of the OSHA questionnaire. It may be easier for you to complete this separately for each type of respirator-requiring job, and attach that to the questionnaire.

Please find a separate Part B section here, which you can use to do that:

<http://www.affinityhealth.org/object/services-specialty-occupational-blog-respirator-form-2009-11-24.html>

After employees complete their confidential health sections, they should then send them directly to the clinic.

This approach complies with the OSHA Respirator standard and protects confidentiality of health information. And, it may reduce the number of full exams you need to obtain by 50 percent.

That way, both you AND your employees can be helped to breathe a little easier!