

FACT SHEET

For Users of Respiratory Protective Equipment

MIT-affiliated staff, researchers, and other employees who are required or wish to use respiratory protective equipment while at work must participate in the MIT Respiratory Protection Program (RPP). The Industrial Hygiene Program (IHP) within MIT's Environment, Health & Safety Office, located in N52-496, manages the RPP according to the requirements of the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).



Before you decide to use respiratory protection, get in touch with a member of the IHP (x2-3477 or respirators@mit.edu) to discuss your options. Often other, simple solutions can be implemented to reduce any anticipated exposure to vapors, dusts, or other airborne contaminants. These other solutions are often effective in preventing exposure so that respiratory protection is not required.

Individuals must satisfy several requirements before IHP will issue him/her a respirator. These requirements are outlined below and must be met in the order listed:

- 1. Receive a medical evaluation from MIT Medical:** To schedule the evaluation, call x3-8552 and request a "respirator user exam". The medical evaluation consists of completing a questionnaire, a brief physical examination, and a lung function test (if necessary). MIT Medical will complete an approval form for the user that will be delivered to the IHP Office in N52-496.
- 2. Complete the Exposure Evaluation Questionnaire:** During your appointment at MIT Medical, you will be given an Exposure Evaluation Questionnaire that you must complete and deliver to IHP in N52-496 (you can deliver it at the time of your "fit test" – see number 3 below). Your answers to this questionnaire will help IHP staff determine what type of respiratory protection you require. In some cases, IHP may conduct air sampling to better understand the exposure.
- 3. Schedule a Respirator Fit Test:** Before you can wear a respirator, a test must be conducted to determine if the respirator fits you adequately. This test is called a "fit test" and takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. During the test, an IHP staff member will train you in how to use and take care of your respirator. Additionally, you will put on your respirator and a series of tests will be performed to determine if it fits you well. To schedule a fit test, call IHP at x2-3477 or email at respirators@mit.edu. IHP will charge your department for the respirator you receive – you must bring a departmental account number to your fit test so IHP can properly apply the charges. Additionally, for men, it is VERY IMPORTANT that you come to your fit test with a clean-shaven face. Whiskers and stubble can interfere with the fit of the respirator. (Please note, fit tests must be conducted annually for as long as you use your respirator – IHP will contact you when it's time for you to have another fit test).



Please keep in mind that once a respirator has been issued to you, it is for your use only. Others are not permitted to use your respirator for any reason or condition. If another individual wants to use a respirator, inform them of the RPP requirements.

Should you require replacement parts or new filters/cartridges for your respirator, call IHP.

When you come to IHP's office for your annual fit test, you will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire. Your responses to this questionnaire will inform IHP of your current need for respiratory protection and the current conditions under which you use your respirator. If you do not complete this questionnaire, you will be removed from the list of approved respirator users. When you no longer need your respirator or if you leave the Institute, contact IHP.



A complete written summary of MIT's RPP is available at <http://web.mit.edu/environment/ehs/respiratory.html>.