Required Information Handout
For Dust Mask Users

Information For Employees
Using Filtering Facepiece Respirators
When Not Required

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 Cal/OSHA standards.

If your employer provides filtering facepiece respirators for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the filtering facepiece respirator (hereinafter referred to as “dust mask”) 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 dust mask’s limitations.

2. Choose dust masks certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, certifies respirators (not OSHA). A label or statement of certification should appear on the dust mask or packaging. It will tell you what the dust mask is designed for and how much it will protect you.

   Note: COSE requires a NIOSH 95 Series certification for all filtering facepiece respirators. A dust mask with this certification can provide some filtration of fumes and aerosols, however it cannot filter gases or vapors – you need an air purifying respirator with charcoal filter cartridges for that.

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 particles of fumes or smoke.

4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else’s respirator.

5. All respirators should be replaced whenever they are damaged, soiled, or causing noticeable increased breathing resistance.

I, __________________________ have read and understand the information contained within this information statement and agree to abide by its recommendations. I understand that if I use a filtering facepiece respirator (i.e., dust mask), it is voluntary and for comfort use only.

______________________________    __________________
Signature                             Date

4N95 Not resistant to oil mist; R95 Resistant to oil mist, but restricted to one 8-hour shift.; P95 Oil resistant