

Filtering Facepiece Respirator Program

This program has been established by the College of Science and Engineering (COSE) in accordance with California Code of Regulations Title 8 Section 5144, Respirator Protection.

Important!

This program does NOT apply to the use of respirators¹ worn to protect employees from exposures to airborne contaminants above the Permissible Exposure Limits or otherwise necessary to protect employee health. Such “air purifying” respirators should only be issued when it is impractical to remove airborne contaminants through the use of engineering or administrative controls (ie, fume hoods, glove boxes, housekeeping, special techniques).

The use of respirators for employee protection is governed under the University’s air purifying respirator Program and only campus EHOS may issue such equipment after a thorough evaluation. For more information or to obtain a (air purifying-type) respirator for protection against toxic vapors, gases, fumes, or dust, contact campus EHOS, at 338-1449.

COSE Policy

Departments in the COSE, may allow filtering facepiece² respirators (i.e., dust masks) to be worn on a voluntary basis, only if they are intended merely for the comfort of the employee while performing a particular task.

1. Filtering facepiece dust masks must be certified to meet NIOSH standards for Class 95³ particulate respirators.
2. Dust masks may only be worn by an employee on a voluntary basis for the purpose of comfort against nuisance-level particulates or aerosols.
3. Dust masks must be stored in a bag or box or otherwise protected from dirt or contamination.
4. **Recipients are required to read the information sheet entitled, “*Information for Employees Using Filtering Facepiece Respirators When Not Required*” and sign it before being issued a filtering facepiece respirator (dust mask). There must be one on file for each wearer.**
5. Employees must inform the COSE Health & Safety Specialist or University EHOS staff (x81449) if they are experiencing physical difficulty while wearing the mask or if they are concerned about overexposure to hazardous substances.

¹ dual or single cartridge, air purifying type

² negative pressure particulate filtering facepiece respirator with a filter as an integral part of the facepiece or with the entire facepiece composed of the filtering medium. Note: “surgical masks” are not dust masks and are neither permitted nor suitable for non-medical purposes

³ respirators that meet NIOSH 42 CFR 84 N95, R95, or P95 requirements

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

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 Series⁴** 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





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

Injury and Illness Prevention Program

College of Science and Engineering

Informational Attachment

Dust Masks are Not Respirators

	Intended Purpose	Requirements
	<p>Dust masks, or “filtering facepiece respirators”, are intended to protect the wearer from inhaling excessive dust, dirt, aerosols, and for some types, welding fumes. They do not protect against gases, vapors, or harmful quantities of particulates.</p> <p>The following conditions must exist in order for dust mask respirators to be used voluntarily:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exposure to airborne contaminants is below OSHA permissible exposure limits (PELs). ■ Exposure is only to non-toxic nuisance materials (plant dust, agar dust). ■ There is no exposure to airborne infectious disease agents. ■ The dust mask is not worn to reduce exposure to gases or vapors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ COSE Policy covers dust masks ■ Users must read a short training policy sheet titled, <i>"Information for Employees Using Filtering Facepiece Respirators When Not Required"</i>. ■ All dust masks must meet NIOSH N95 standards.
	<p>Simple surgical masks can reduce the spread of bacteria in aerosols. Apart from protecting the wearer from splashes in the mouth with body fluids, they are intended to protect others from the wearer's oral and nasal bacteria. They are not designed to protect the wearer from inhaled particles.</p>	<p>Surgical masks are not allowed.</p>
 <p>Half-Face↑</p>  <p>Full-Face↑</p>	<p>A respirator is a device designed to protect the wearer from inhaling harmful dusts, fumes, vapors, and/or gases.</p>	<p>Users must comply with the SFSU Respirator Program before a respirator may be issued by Campus EHOS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Evaluation of exposure ■ Medical Review ■ Training ■ Fit Testing