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VOLUNTARY RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM

WELCOME!

This sample Voluntary Respiratory Protection Program (1910.134(c)(2)) is provided to assist you as an employer in developing programs tailored to your own operation. We encourage you to copy, expand, modify and customize this sample as necessary to accomplish this goal. This program is for voluntary employee use of respirators and not for “traditional” respirator use (1910.134). Per 1910.134(c)(2)(ii): Exception: Employers are not required to include in a written respiratory protection program those employees whose only use of respirators involves the voluntary use of filtering facepieces (dust masks). See Appendix D of 1910.134 for requirements concerning the above referenced exception. A sample written program for “traditional respirator use” and a sample written program for filtering facepiece masks can be found within this Consultative Services Web site.

This document is provided as a compliance aid, but does not constitute a legal interpretation of OSHA Standards, nor does it replace the need to be familiar with, and follow, the actual OSHA Standards (including any North Carolina specific changes.) Although this document is intended to be consistent with OSHA Standards, if an area is considered by the reader to be inconsistent, the OSHA standard should be referred to and followed. Of course, we welcome your comments and feedback!

The N.C. Department of Labor OSH Consultative Services Bureau can be contacted for further assistance such as helping you set up your individual program and even with on-site surveys. Feel free to contact us at 1-800-NC-LABOR or at (919) 807-2899. You may also want to visit the Consultative Services Bureau Web site at: <http://www.nclabor.com/osh/consult/consult.htm>.

Remember: A written safety/health program is only effective if it is put into place!

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(Company Name)

Respiratory Protection

(Voluntary)

General

In the Respiratory Protection program, hazard assessment and selection of proper respiratory PPE is conducted in the same manner as for other types of PPE. All respirator use by our employees is VOLUNTARY. _____ (company name) provides air purifying respirators for employees to use if they choose. All requirements for a respiratory protection program and training have been met. References: OSHA Standards *Respiratory Protection* (29 CFR 1910.134).

Responsibilities

All Employees shall follow the requirements of this Respiratory Protection Program.

Management

- Implement the requirements of this program;
- Provide a selection of respirators as required;
- Enforce all provisions of this program; and
- _____ shall administer the respiratory protection program.

Program Administrator

- Review sanitation/storage procedures.
- Ensure respirators are properly stored, inspected and maintained;
- Monitor compliance for this program;
- Provide training for affected Employees; and
- Review compliance and ensure monthly inspection of all respirators.

Designated Occupational Health Care Provider

- Review medical questionnaires filled out by employees who use respirators voluntarily (Appendix C).

Program Administrator

_____ is the program administrator who oversees the respiratory protection program and conducts the required evaluations of program effectiveness.

Program Evaluation

Evaluations of the workplace are necessary to ensure that the written respiratory protection program is being properly implemented. This includes consulting with employees to ensure that they are using the respirators properly. Evaluations shall be conducted as necessary to ensure that the provisions of the current written program are being effectively implemented and that it continues to be effective.

Factors to be assessed include, but are not limited to:

- Respirator fit (including the ability to use the respirator without interfering with effective workplace performance);
- Appropriate respirator selection for the hazards to which the employee is exposed;
- Proper respirator use under the workplace conditions the employee encounters; and
- Proper respirator maintenance.

Record Keeping

The Company will retain written information regarding medical evaluations, and the respirator program. This information will facilitate employee involvement in the respirator program, assist _____ (Company name) in auditing the adequacy of the program, and provide a record for compliance determinations by OSHA.

Training and Information

Effective training for employees who use respirators is essential. The training must be comprehensive and understandable. Training will be provided prior to an employee using a respirator in the workplace. The training shall ensure that each employee can demonstrate knowledge of at least the following:

- How to inspect, put on and remove, use, and check the seals of the respirator;
- What the procedures are for maintenance and storage of the respirator;
- How to recognize medical signs and symptoms that may limit or prevent the effective use of respirators; and
- The general requirements of this program.

Retraining shall be conducted annually and when:

- Changes in the workplace or the type of respirator render previous training obsolete;
- Inadequacies in the employee's knowledge or use of the respirator indicate that the employee has not retained the requisite understanding or skill; and
- Other situation arises in which retraining appears necessary to ensure safe respirator use.

Classroom Instruction

- How to inspect, put on and remove, use, and check the seals of the respirator;
- What the procedures are for maintenance and storage of the respirator; and

- How to recognize medical signs and symptoms that may limit or prevent the effective use of respirators.

Fit Testing

Fit testing is not required for voluntary use respirators.

Physical and Medical Qualifications

Records of medical evaluations must be retained and made available in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.1020.

Medical evaluation required

Using a respirator may place a physiological burden on employees that varies with the type of respirator worn, the job and workplace conditions in which the respirator is used, and the medical status of the employee. _____ (Company Name) provides a medical evaluation to determine the employee's ability to use a respirator, before the employee is allowed to use the respirator in the workplace.

Medical evaluation procedures

The employee will be provided a medical questionnaire (Appendix C).

Follow-up medical examination

The company shall ensure that a follow-up medical examination is provided for an employee who gives a positive response to any question among questions in Part B of the questionnaire or whose initial medical examination demonstrates the need for a follow-up medical examination. The follow-up medical examination shall include any medical tests, consultations, or diagnostic procedures that the Physician deems necessary to make a final determination.

Administration of the medical questionnaire and examinations

The medical questionnaire and examinations shall be administered confidentially during the employee's normal working hours or at a time and place convenient to the employee. The medical questionnaire shall be administered in a manner that ensures that the employee understands its content. The company shall provide the employee with an opportunity to discuss the questionnaire and examination results with the Physician.

Supplemental information for the Physician

The following information must be provided to the Physician before the Physician makes a recommendation concerning an employee's ability to use a respirator:

- The type and weight of the respirator to be used by the employee;
- The duration and frequency of respirator use (including use for rescue and escape);
- The expected physical work effort;
- Additional protective clothing and equipment to be worn;
- Temperature and humidity extremes that may be encountered; and

- Any supplemental information provided previously to the Physician regarding an employee need not be provided for a subsequent medical evaluation if the information and the Physician remain the same.

The Company has provided the Physician with a copy of the written respiratory protection program and a copy of the OSHA Standard 1910.134

Medical determination

In determining the employee's ability to use a respirator, the Company shall obtain a written recommendation regarding the employee's ability to use the respirator from the Physician. The recommendation shall provide only the following information:

- Any limitations on respirator use related to the medical condition of the employee, or relating to the workplace conditions in which the respirator will be used, including whether or not the employee is medically able to use the respirator;
- Users shall not remove respirators while in a hazardous environment;
- The need, if any, for follow-up medical evaluations;
- A statement that the Physician has provided the employee with a copy of the Physician's written recommendation; and
- If the respirator is a negative pressure respirator and the Physician finds a medical condition that may place the employee's health at increased risk if the respirator is used, the Company shall provide an APR (Air Purifying Respirator) if the Physician's medical evaluation finds that the employee can use such a respirator. If a subsequent medical evaluation finds that the employee is medically able to use a negative pressure respirator, then the Company is no longer required to provide an APR.

Additional Medical Evaluations

At a minimum, the Company shall provide additional medical evaluations that comply with the requirements of this section if:

- An employee reports medical signs or symptoms that are related to ability to use a respirator;
- A Physician, supervisor, or the respirator program administrator informs the Company that an employee needs to be reevaluated;
- Information from the respiratory protection program, including observations made during fit testing and program evaluation, indicates a need for employee reevaluation; and
- A change occurs in workplace conditions (e.g., physical work effort, protective clothing, temperature) that may result in a substantial increase in the physiological burden placed on an employee.

Respirator Operation and Use

Respirators will only be used following the respiratory protection safety procedures established in this program. The Operations and Use Manuals for each type of respirator will be maintained

by the Program Administrator and be available to all qualified users. Surveillance by the direct supervisor shall be maintained of work area conditions and degree of employee exposure or stress. When there is a change in work area conditions or degree of employee exposure or stress that may affect respirator effectiveness, the Company shall reevaluate the continued effectiveness of the respirator.

For continued protection of respirator users, the following general use rules apply:

- Users shall not remove respirators while in a hazardous environment;
- Respirators are to be stored in sealed containers out of harmful atmospheres;
- Store respirators away from heat and moisture;
- Store respirators such that the sealing area does not become distorted or warped; and
- Store respirator such that the face piece is protected.

Cleaning and Disinfecting

_____ (Company name) provides each respirator user with a respirator that is clean, sanitary, and in good working order. _____ (Company name) ensures that respirators are cleaned and disinfected using the Standard Operating Procedure SOP:

Cleaning and Disinfecting

The respirators shall be cleaned and disinfected when:

- A respirator issued for the exclusive use of an employee is the responsibility of that Employee and shall be cleaned and disinfected as often as necessary to be maintained in a sanitary condition; and
- A respirator issued to more than one employee shall be cleaned and disinfected before being worn by different individuals.

Respirator Storage

Respirators are to be stored as follows:

- All respirators shall be stored to protect them from damage, contamination, dust, sunlight, extreme temperatures, excessive moisture, and damaging chemicals, and they shall be packed or stored to prevent deformation of the face piece and exhalation valve.

Repair of Respirators

Respirators that fail an inspection or are otherwise found to be defective will be removed from service to be discarded, repaired or adjusted in accordance with the following procedures:

- Repairs or adjustments to respirators are to be made only by persons appropriately trained to perform such operations and shall use only the respirator manufacturer's NIOSH approved parts designed for the respirator;
- Repairs shall be made according to the manufacturer's recommendations and specifications for the type and extent of repairs to be performed; and

- Reducing and admission valves, regulators, and alarms shall be adjusted or repaired only by the manufacturer or a technician trained by the manufacturer.