

Do You Know the Roles of NIOSH, OSHA, and the FDA Related to Respiratory Protection?

TYPES OF RESPIRATORY PROTECTION



Elastomeric Half Facepiece Respirators are reusable and have replaceable cartridges or filters. They cover the nose and mouth and provide protection against gases, vapors, or particles when equipped with the appropriate cartridge or filter.



Elastomeric Full Facepiece Respirators are reusable and have replaceable canisters, cartridges, or filters. The facepiece covers the face and eyes, which offers eye protection.



Filtering Facepiece Respirators are disposable half facepiece respirators that filter out particles such as dusts, mists, and fumes. They do NOT provide protection against gases and vapors.



Powered Air-Purifying Respirators (PAPRs) have a battery-powered blower that pulls air through attached filters, canisters, or cartridges. They provide protection against gases, vapors, or particles, when equipped with the appropriate cartridge, canister, or filter. Loose-fitting PAPRs do not require fit testing and can be used with facial hair.



Supplied-Air Respirators are connected to a separate source that supplies clean compressed air through a hose. They can be lightweight and used while working for long hours in environments not immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH).



Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBAs) are used for entry into or escape from environments considered to be IDLH. They contain their own breathing air supply and can be either open circuit or closed circuit.



Combination Respirators can be either a supplied-air/SCBA respirator or supplied-air/air-purifying respirator. The SCBA type has a self-contained air supply if primary airline fails and can be used in IDLH environments. The air-purifying type offers protection using both a supplied-air hose & an air-purifying component and cannot be used for entry into IDLH environments.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

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Image courtesy of CDC/NIOSH

Here is a quick overview:

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health NIOSH	Conducts respirator research and testing, standards development, user guidance, and approves respirators.
Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)	Has Respiratory Protection Standard, 29 CFR 1910.134 for General Industry and Maritime by reference, 29 CFR 1926.103 for Construction. OSHA is responsible for standard enforcement.
Food and Drug Administration (FDA)	Reviews surgical N95s or N95 filtering facepiece respirators intended to prevent specific diseases or infections.

To learn more about the roles of NIOSH, OSHA, and the FDA, check out the NIOSH Science Blog at: https://blogs.cdc.gov/niosh-science-blog/2021/09/09/respirator_roles/.

For additional information on the SMCX's services, please visit the SMCX-hosted website at: <https://www.smcx.org/>.



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