
Respiratory Protection

Respiratory protection should be selected by a qualified person based on the conditions and the test results of the environment, as well as the work activity to be performed. There are two types of respiratory equipment: air purifying respirators and supplied air respirators.

Air Purifying Respirators

Air purifying respirators offer the advantages of being lightweight and having a low impact on the employee's performance, while allowing full mobility. These respirators have limited applications, as they cannot be used in a confined space operation. Air purifying respirators can only be used when all of the following conditions are met:

- Oxygen greater than 19.5%
- Atmosphere concentration must be known so the appropriate cartridge may be selected
- Cartridge must be available for contaminants
- Contaminants must exhibit adequate warning properties
- Concentration of contaminant must be within the range of the respirator, based on the performance factor of the specific type of respirator

Supplied Air Respirators

Supplied air respirators provide the employee with a controlled source of air from a stationary system. The benefits of a constant and controlled supply of breathing air increases protection allowance.

Benefits of airline respirators:

- Extended air supply
- Controlled air supply

Disadvantages of airline respirators:

- Potential damage/contamination to airline
- Limited mobility to the maximum of 300 feet