

6739. Respiratory Protection.

(a) General Requirements.

(1) The employer shall assure that:

(A) Employees use approved respiratory equipment in compliance with this regulation when handling pesticides where respirators are required by label, restricted material permit condition, or regulation.

(2) In any workplace where respirators are required by label, restricted material permit condition, regulation, or employer, the employer shall establish a written respiratory protection program with work site-specific procedures. The program shall be updated as necessary to reflect those changes in workplace conditions that affect respirator use. The employer shall include in the program the following provisions, as applicable:

(A) Procedures for selecting respirators for use in the workplace;

(B) Medical evaluations of employees required to use respirators;

(C) Fit testing procedures for tight-fitting respirators;

(D) Procedures for proper use of respirators in routine and reasonably foreseeable emergency situations;

(E) Procedures and schedules for cleaning, disinfecting, storing, inspecting, repairing, discarding, and otherwise maintaining respirators;

(F) Procedures to ensure adequate air quality, quantity, and flow of breathing air for atmosphere-supplying respirators;

(G) Training of employees in the respiratory hazards to which they are potentially exposed during routine and emergency situations, including Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH) atmospheres, if appropriate;

(H) Training of employees in the proper use of respirators, including putting on and removing them, any limitations on their use, and their maintenance; and

(I) Procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the program pursuant to subsections (n)(1) and (2).

1. The respirator program administrator shall administer the respiratory protection program in compliance with this section.

2. The employer shall provide respirators, training, and medical evaluations at no cost to the employee.

(b) Voluntary Respirator Provision.

(1) An employer may provide respirators at the request of employees or permit employees to use their own respirators for use on a voluntary basis, if the employer determines that such respirator use will not in itself create a hazard.

(2) If the employer determines that any voluntary respirator use is permissible, the employer shall provide the respirator users with the information contained in subsection (r) and display this information alongside the display of either the Hazard Communication Information for Employees Handling Pesticides in Agricultural Settings (Pesticide Safety Information Series leaflet A-8), or Hazard Communication Information for Employees Handling Pesticides in Noncrop Settings (Pesticide Safety Information Series leaflet N-8), at a central location in the workplace.

(3) Under the employer-supplied voluntary respirator provision, the employer shall establish and implement the provisions of a written respiratory protection program necessary to ensure that any employee using a respirator voluntarily is medically able to use that respirator, and that the respirator is cleaned, stored, and maintained so that its use does not present a health hazard to the user. Employers are not required to include a written respiratory protection program for those employees whose only use of respirators involves the voluntary use of filtering facepieces.

(A) The employer shall provide respirators, training, and medical evaluations at no cost to the employee.

(c) Selection of Respirators. The employer shall select and provide an appropriate respirator certified by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) based on the respiratory hazard(s) and relevant workplace and user factors to which the worker is exposed; and the appropriate pesticide label, restricted materials permit condition, regulation, or employer requirements, whichever is most protective.

(1) The employer shall select respirators from a sufficient number of respirator models and sizes so that the respirator is acceptable to, and correctly fits, the user.

(2) Fumigant-confining structures shall be considered IDLH atmosphere unless proven not to be by appropriate measuring devices as to that chemical. The employer shall provide the following respirators for employee use in IDLH atmospheres:

(A) A full facepiece pressure demand self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) certified by NIOSH for a minimum service life of thirty minutes, or

(B) A combination full facepiece pressure demand supplied-air respirator (SAR) with auxiliary self-contained air supply.

(C) Respirators provided only for escape from IDLH atmospheres shall be NIOSH-certified for escape from the atmosphere in which they will be used.

(d) Medical Evaluation. The employer shall ensure a medical evaluation is conducted to determine the employee's ability to use a respirator before the employee is fit tested or required to use the respirator in the workplace. The employer may discontinue an employee's medical evaluations when the employee is no longer required to use a respirator.

(1) Medical Evaluation Procedures.

(A) The employer shall identify a physician or other licensed health care professional (PLHCP) to perform medical evaluations using the medical questionnaire in subsection (q) or an equivalent form or an initial medical examination that obtains the same information as the medical questionnaire.

(B) The medical evaluation shall obtain the information requested by the questionnaire in subsection (q), sections 1 and 2.

(2) Follow-up Medical Examination.

(A) The employer shall ensure that a follow-up medical examination is provided when a PLHCP determines that there is a need for a follow-up medical examination.

(B) The follow-up medical examination shall include any medical tests, consultations, or diagnostic procedures that the PLHCP deems necessary to make a final determination.

(3) Administration of the Medical Questionnaire and Examinations.