



The following information is a basic guide for the use of a disposable N95 filtering face piece respirator.

Note: This information is not intended to meet the Respirator Program training requirements found in Cal/OSHA §5144 training requirements. **Note - exception:** Will meet requirements of §5144 appendix D.

I. N95 Filtering Face-piece Respirator

N95 filtering face-piece respirators are *air-purifying* respirators certified by the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) to have filter efficiency level of 95% or greater against particulate aerosols free of oil and greater than 0.3 microns in size.

II. Limitations of N95 Respirators

- 1) N95 respirators **ONLY** filter out particulate contaminants greater than 0.3 microns in size.
- 2) N95 respirators do not protect you from:
 - Chemical vapors/ gases
 - Oxygen deficient atmosphere
 - High risk exposures such as those created by aerosol-generating exposures.
- 3) Beards or other facial hair, which may interfere with the direct contact between your face and the sealing surface of the respirator will likely degrade or void the effectiveness of the mask.

N95 Respirator Limitations

- Proper fit, usage and maintenance is critical to respirator performance
- Filters particulates only
- Will not protect you from gases, vapors, oil mists (chemicals)
- May be uncomfortable if used for extended periods
- Can not be worn by individuals with facial hair that disturbs the respirator seal (beards, goatees, etc.)
- Must be replaced when wet, damaged, soiled or contaminated
- Cannot be used in an oxygen deficient atmosphere

Note: If the respirator becomes damaged, soiled or you experience problems with using the respirator (breathing becomes difficult, dizziness, irritation, etc.), leave the work area immediately and remove the respirator when you are no longer exposed to the potential airborne hazard. Inform your supervisor about the issue.

III. Pre-use Inspection

Prior to wearing the N95 respirator, inspect the respirator for damage and contamination. Verify all components of the respirator are in good condition (e.g. straps, nose piece, etc.)

III. Wearing the Respirator & Seal-Checking Procedures

- 1) Hold the respirator in one hand, with the nose piece at the fingertips and let the head straps hang loosely in front of the respirator.
- 2) Place respirator under the chin, with the nosepiece up.
While holding the respirator with one hand, pull the top strap over your head, resting it at the top back of your head.
- 3) Pull the bottom strap over your head, and place it around your neck, below your ears.
- 4) Using both hands, mold the nose piece to the shape of your nose by pushing inward with your fingertips.

Note that pinching the molding piece with 1 hand will likely result in less effective respirator fit.

- 5) To remove the respirator, hold the respirator with one gloved hand. With the other hand, pull the bottom strap over your head, and then pull the top strap off.

III. handling-Storage of N-95 Respirator

When the respirator is not in use (worn) it must be properly stored to prevent contamination or damage. For short term storage (breaks) a plastic bag (eg zip lock) would provide ample protection. Note: Recommendation is to replace N95 often, break periods would be an appropriate time to replace the mask.