Respirator-Use Requirements Flow Chart
29 CFR 1910.134(c)

Are respirators: 1) Necessary to protect the health of the employee; or
2) required by the employer?

YES

Must establish and implement a written respiratory program with worksite-specific procedures

NO

Does the employer permit voluntary use of respirators?

YES

STOP

NO

Does the only use of respirators involve the voluntary use of filtering facepieces (dust masks)?

YES

• Employer determines that the respirator itself does not create a hazard.
• Must provide users with information contained in Appendix D.
• No written respirator program required.
• Filtering facepiece is not required to be NIOSH approved but is strongly recommended.

NO

• Employer determines that the respirator itself does not create a hazard.
• Must provide users with information in Appendix D.
• Must establish and implement those elements of a written respirator program necessary to ensure that employee is medically able to use that respirator.
• Employer is not responsible for cost of respirator but must cover the expenses of medical evaluation, training, and maintenance.
Appendix D to 29 CFR 1910.134 – Respiratory Protection

Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the Standard

Respirators are an effective method of protection against designated hazards when properly selected and worn. Respirator use is encouraged, even when exposures are below the exposure limit, to provide an additional level of comfort and protection for workers. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. Sometimes, workers may wear respirators to avoid exposures to hazards, even if the amount of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by OSHA standards. If your employer provides respirators for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own respirator, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard.

You should do the following:

1. Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirators limitations.

2. Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.

3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases, vapors, or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke.

4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else’s respirator.

[63 FR 1152, Jan. 8, 1998; 63 FR 20098, April 23, 1998]
Facial Hairstyles and Filtering Facepiece Respirators

Intended for workers who wear tight-fitting respirators

**RESPIRATOR SEALING SURFACE**

CLEAN SHAVEN $\checkmark$

STUBBLE $\times$

LONG STUBBLE $\times$

FULL BEARD $\times$

FRENCH FORK $\times$

DUCKTAIL $\times$

VERDI $\times$

GARIBALDI $\times$

BANDHOLZ $\times$

SOUL PATCH $\checkmark$

GOATEE (Careful! Chin hair may easily cross the seal)

CHIN CURTAIN $\times$

EXTENDED GOATEE $\times$

CIRCLE BEARD $\times$

ANCHOR (Careful! Chin hair may easily cross the seal)

BALBO $\times$

VAN DYKE $\times$

IMPERIAL $\times$

SIDE WHISKERS $\checkmark$

MUTTON CHOPS $\times$

HULIHEE (Careful not to cross the seal)

HORSESHOE $\times$

ZAPPA $\checkmark$

WALRUS $\checkmark$

PAINTER'S BRUSH $\checkmark$

CHEVRON $\checkmark$

HANDLEBAR $\checkmark$

PENCIL $\checkmark$

LAMPSHADE $\checkmark$

ZORRO $\checkmark$

VILLAIN (Careful not to cross the seal)

WET NOODLE $\times$

ENGLISH $\times$

DALI $\times$

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*If your respirator has an exhalation valve, some of these styles may interfere with the valve working properly if the facial hair comes in contact with it.

†This graphic may not include all types of facial hairstyles. For any style, hair should not cross under the respirator sealing surface.

Source: OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard

Further Reading: NIOSH Respirator Trusted-Source Webpage
https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/respirators/disp_part/respsource3fittest.html

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

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