

The purpose of a respirator is to protect wearers from inhaling harmful contaminants.

It is important that:

- the respirator is comfortable to wear and fits properly
- the respirator, cartridge, and/or filter types are selected appropriately and provide adequate protection from harmful contaminants
- you assess and remove any respirator interferences like facial hair, excessive make-up or face cream prior to use
- you review engineering and administrative controls to minimize exposure before selecting personal protective equipment.

It is your responsibility to inspect, maintain, and use your respirator properly.

Inspect and seal check every time

Inspection

Inspection is required every time you use your respirator. Respirators which are not used daily should be inspected at least once a month.

Before using your respirator:

- remove respirator from the sealable bag
- check that the valves, cartridges and straps are properly connected
- ensure the face piece is clean and check for any damage
- ensure single use (e.g. N95) respirators are clean and in proper shape
- ensure respirator cartridge is replaced as per the cartridge change schedule — usually to replace cartridges every year or more frequently if using respirator often.

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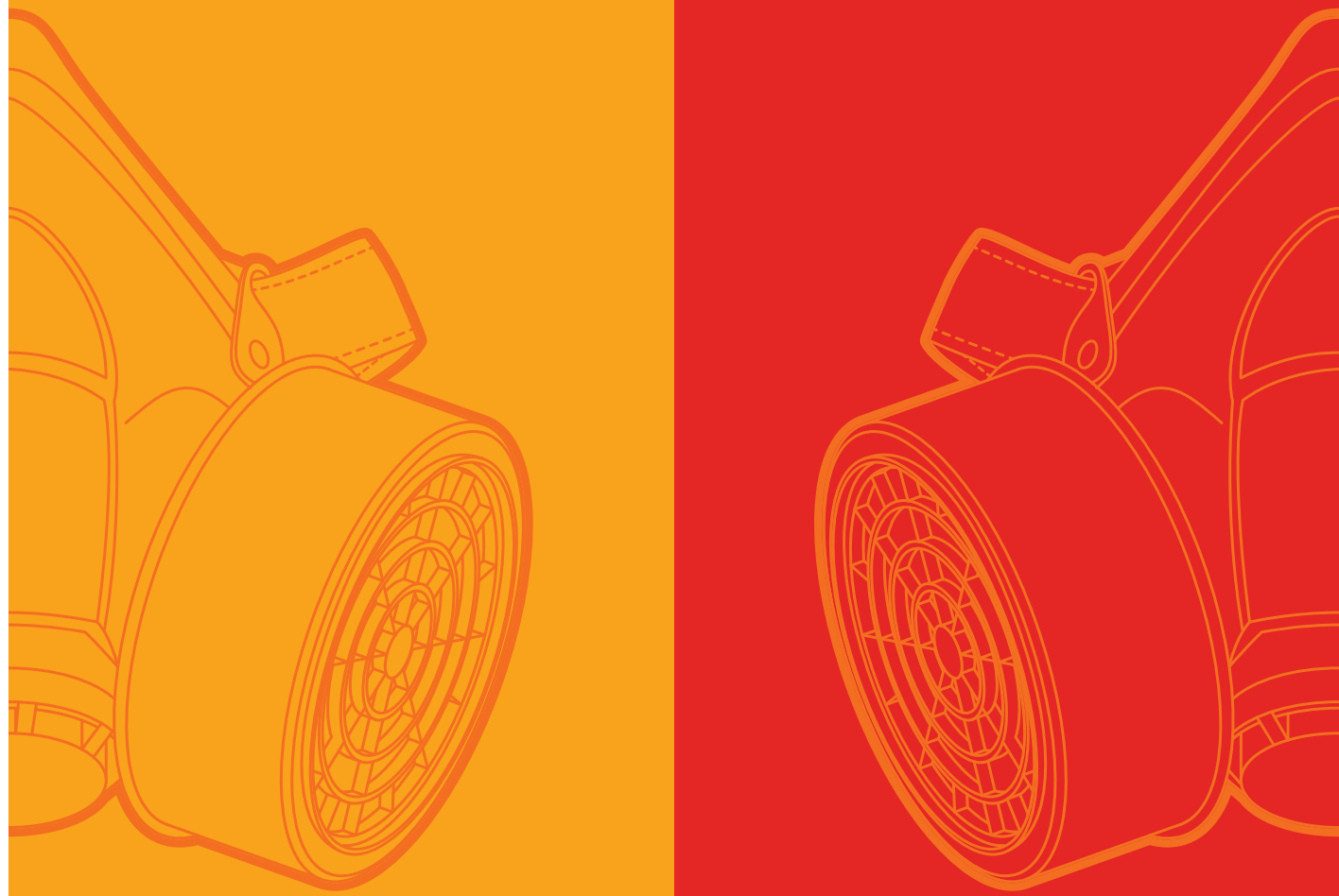
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Respirator Use and Care



Performing seal checks

It's important to perform a seal check every single time you use a respirator. No matter what method you use for your seal check, no air should be felt escaping the respirator. If leaks are detected, the respirator needs to be adjusted.

N95 disposable/single-use respirator

Positive pressure seal check

1. Cover the front of the respirator with one hand.
2. Exhale a big breath and check for air leaking outside of the respirator.



Cartridge respirator

Negative pressure seal check

1. Place the palms of your hands over the inlet valves.
2. Inhale gently and hold for a few seconds.
3. Ensure the facepiece collapses slightly against your face and stays collapsed. No air should leak into the facepiece from the top, bottom or sides.



Positive pressure seal check

1. Cover the exhalation valve so that no air flows out.
2. Exhale gently to force air into the facepiece. Blowing too hard can cause a seal break.
3. Ensure the facepiece bulges out and stays out. No air should leak out of the facepiece from the top, bottom or sides.



Storage, cleaning and considerations

Storage

Store respirators and cartridges in sealable bags to prevent contamination and minimize cartridge saturation.

Cleaning and sanitization

Maintain respirators by cleaning them after each use with soap and water or an alcohol-free wipe. Sanitize shared respirators after each use by immersing in a 50ppm bleach-water solution for two minutes.

Dispose all filtering N95 respirators after each use.

Considerations

If you detect odour or experience irritation from a contaminant, leave the work area immediately and re-inspect your respirator. Contaminant breakthrough before end-of-service life of a cartridge may require reevaluation of work, contaminants and requirements. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines for cartridge maintenance and replacement procedures.

Communication can be difficult while wearing a respirator, so make plans with your team ahead of time.

Fit testing

Fit testing is conducted by Staff Wellness in order to reduce the potential risks to employees.

Fit testing is required:

- at least every two years
- prior to any respirator being issued
- if the respirator type changes
- if workplace conditions change
- if your facial features change due to weight fluctuation, dental work, etc.

To book your fit test, visit ucalgary.ca/staffwellness/respiratory_protection_program