

Voluntary Use of Filtering Facepieces (N-95) Associated with Protection from Wildfire Smoke

This document serves to document the *voluntary* use of filtering facepieces (N-95s) specific to wildfire smoke events. California Code of Regulations, Title 8, §5141.1 requires that employees be provided N-95 respirators for voluntary use during wildfire events when the Air Quality Index (AQI) for particulate is between 150 and 500, as reported by the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District. N-95 respirators are an effective method of protection against wildfire smoke particulates when properly worn. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. 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 (as outlined in Appendix B of Section 5141.1 in the California Code of Regulations):

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 designated to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases and vapors.
4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.
5. Employees who have a heart or lung problem should ask their doctor before using a respirator.

Employee's Statement:

I have read and received a copy of this document and agree to take the precautions outlined within.

Employee Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Supervisor's Statement:

I have reviewed the employee's job duties and have determined that the voluntary use of a filtering facepieces will not in itself create a hazard.

Supervisor Name (Print)

Signature

Date

For further information on proper selection, use and care of your N-95, please review the UC Davis Respirator Protection Manual