USER SEAL CHECK

A USER SEAL CHECK is an action conducted by the respirator user to determine if the respirator is properly seated to the face. Each user must perform seal checks after donning a respirator and after each adjustment to the respirator. If the employee fails the user seal check test, the respirator must be readjusted and rechecked or another facepiece must be selected.

Either the positive and negative pressure checks, or the respirator manufacturer's recommended user seal check method shall be used.

The employee must not have any hair growth (e.g., beard stubble, sideburns, or beard) that comes between the sealing surface of the respirator facepiece and the face, as well as hair that interferes with valve function, or any other condition that might interfere with the face-to-facepiece seal such as jewelry or facial makeup. The user seal check must be used for all respirators on which such checks are possible. If a user seal check cannot be performed on a tight-fitting respirator, the OSHA standard prohibits that respirator from being used.

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE PRESSURE CHECKS

FACEPIECE POSITIVE PRESSURE CHECK

Close off the exhalation valve and exhale gently into the facepiece. The face fit is considered satisfactory if a slight positive pressure can be built up inside the facepiece without any evidence of outward leakage of air at the seal. For most respirators, this method of leak testing requires the wearer to first remove the exhalation valve cover before closing off the exhalation valve, and then carefully replacing it after the test.

FACEPIECE NEGATIVE PRESSURE CHECK

Close off the inlet opening of the canister or cartridge(s) by covering it with the palm of the hand(s) or by replacing the filter seal(s). Inhale gently so that the facepiece collapses slightly, and hold your breath for ten seconds. The design of the inlet opening of some cartridges cannot be effectively covered with the palm of the hand, which requires that the test be performed by covering the inlet opening of the cartridge with a thin latex or nitrile glove. If the facepiece remains in its slightly collapsed condition, and no inward leakage of air is detected, the tightness of the respirator is considered satisfactory.

MANUFACTURER'S RECOMMENDED USER SEAL CHECK PROCEDURES

The respirator manufacturer's recommended procedures for performing a user seal check may be used instead of the positive and/or negative pressure check procedures, provided that the employer demonstrates that the manufacturer's procedures are equally effective in detecting seal leakage compared to the positive pressure and negative pressure checks described above.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Read the Wright State University Respiratory Protection Policy.

If you have questions concerning respirators, respirator use, or to schedule a fit test, please contact Marjorie Markopoulos at 775-2797 or the EHS Office at 775-2215