

Voluntary Respirator Usage Guidance

Applicability

All BGSU faculty, staff, and student employees as part of the university's Respiratory Protection Program, and students in academic programs

Introduction

While the information contained in this policy has always applied to university employees per the university's Respiratory Protection Program in compliance with 29CFR1910.134, there wasn't clear guidance for students since they legally don't fall under the Public Employment Risk Reduction Program (PERRP). It is the belief of BGSU officials that students should be treated the same as employees under this standard to ensure the highest level of protection for their health and wellbeing while engaging in educational activities.

Guidance

If departments allow students, student employees, faculty, and/or staff to wear respirators voluntarily, they must follow these protocols:

Filtering Facepieces (dust masks)

Definition: A negative pressure particulate respirator with a filter as an integral part of the facepiece or with the entire facepiece composed of the filtering medium (N, R, or P type with 95, 99, or 100% particulate efficiencies).

- Provide a copy of the "Voluntary Use" form found on Environmental Health and Safety's (EHS) website under Occupational Health & Safety, Respiratory Protection, to the affected individual. Submit a signed copy of this form to EHS using the contact information below or via email to envhs@bgsu.edu. **Note:** Alternative measures to deliver the required information may be available for department's that have a large number of individuals voluntarily wearing these masks. Contact EHS to discuss.

All other types of respirators (i.e. elastomeric requiring a cartridge, canister or separate filtering medium from the facepiece)

- Voluntary Use form as described above for filtering facepieces, and;
- A medical evaluation provided at the cost of the department allowing use (approximately \$15/person). This entails providing the affected individual with a copy of the "Medical Questionnaire Form" found on EHS's website under Occupational Health & Safety, Respiratory Protection. The form must be completed and submitted directly to Employer Services at Falcon for review (instructions are at the top of the form). Please make sure departmental billing information is added to the form (bottom of last page). EHS will be notified if the individual has been approved or not and will notify that individual and their instructor or supervisor of the results. Wearing this type of respirator is prohibited until approval has been received.

Requiring the use of respirators is prohibited unless a proper job hazard analysis has been conducted by EHS. If it is believed that there may be a significant respiratory exposure present to any harmful dusts, fogs, fumes, mists, gases, smokes, sprays, vapors, etc. during classwork, contact EHS. If the analysis performed determines exposure levels are above acceptable limits, measures such as elimination, substitution, and engineering and administrative controls must be evaluated first, leaving personal protective equipment as a last resort in controlling exposures. BGSU's EHS department is currently not aware of any required respirator usage in the academic areas of campus.

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