

## **Bowie State University Respiratory Protection Program**

**Purpose:** This Respiratory Protection Program is designed to ensure the safety of all Bowie State University (BSU) facilities staff by providing a clear framework for the proper selection, use, and maintenance of respiratory protection. This program complies with OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.134, ensuring protection against exposure to hazardous airborne contaminants.

**Scope:** This program applies to all employees, contractors, and vendors who may be required to wear respirators during routine or emergency operations within the facilities department at Bowie State University.

### **1.0 Policy Statement**

Bowie State University is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment. Employees who may be exposed to airborne contaminants or oxygen-deficient atmospheres must use respiratory protection in accordance with this program to minimize health risks.

### **2.0 Responsibilities**

- **Safety and Environmental Compliance Coordinator (SECC):**
  - Develop, implement, and maintain the respiratory protection program.
  - Conduct hazard assessments to determine when respiratory protection is necessary.
  - Oversee and coordinate training, fit testing, and medical evaluations.
  - Maintain records of training, fit testing, and medical evaluations.
  - Ensure annual audits of the respiratory protection program are conducted.
- **Facilities Directors and Supervisors:**
  - Ensure appropriate employees use respiratory protection as required.
  - Enforce program requirements and report non-compliance to the SECC.
  - Notify the SECC if working conditions change and require a re-evaluation of respiratory protection needs.
- **Employees:**
  - Use respiratory protection in accordance with this program.
  - Attend required training and fit testing sessions.
  - Maintain and inspect their respirators as instructed.
  - Notify supervisors of any equipment malfunctions or health concerns.

### 3.0 Respiratory Hazard Identification and Assessment

**3.1 Hazard Evaluation:** The SECC and FM Directors will conduct a comprehensive hazard assessment to identify tasks and areas where respiratory protection is required. This assessment will identify:

- Types of hazardous substances (e.g., dusts, vapors, gases, mists).
- Concentrations of airborne contaminants.
- Oxygen-deficient environments.
- Work processes or emergency situations where respiratory protection is necessary.

**3.2 Monitoring and Reassessment:** Periodic air monitoring will be conducted to ensure that respiratory hazards are properly controlled. If new hazards are identified, or if conditions change, the SECC will reassess respiratory protection requirements.

### 4.0 Selection of Respirators

**4.1 Respirator Types:** Bowie State University will provide respirators based on the specific hazards identified during the hazard evaluation. The selection will be made following OSHA guidelines and will include:

- **Air-Purifying Respirators (APRs):** For protection against particulates, gases, or vapors.
- **Powered Air-Purifying Respirators (PAPRs):** For enhanced comfort and protection in extended operations.
- **Supplied-Air Respirators (SARs):** For use in oxygen-deficient atmospheres or when contaminant concentrations exceed the limits of APRs.
- **Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA):** For emergency situations and areas with unknown or immediately dangerous to life or health (IDLH) conditions.

**4.2 Respirator Approval:** All respirators must be certified by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Only respirators that have been approved and fit-tested shall be used.

### 5.0 Medical Evaluations

**5.1 Medical Evaluation Requirement:** Employees required to use respirators must undergo a medical evaluation prior to initial use to ensure they are physically capable of safely wearing respiratory protection. The evaluation will be conducted by a licensed healthcare professional (LHP).

## 5.2 Frequency of Medical Evaluations:

- Initial medical evaluations are mandatory before fit testing or respirator use.
- Additional evaluations will be required if the employee reports symptoms related to respirator use or if conditions affecting the employee's ability to use a respirator (e.g., weight gain, facial injury) change.

## 6.0 Fit Testing

**6.1 Initial and Annual Fit Testing:** Employees who are required to use tight-fitting respirators must undergo fit testing prior to initial use and annually thereafter. Fit testing will be conducted using either:

- **Qualitative Fit Test (QLFT):** For negative pressure respirators.
- **Quantitative Fit Test (QNFT):** For all tight-fitting respirators.

**6.2 Additional Fit Testing:** Fit testing must also be conducted when:

- A different respirator is selected.
- The employee experiences changes in physical condition (e.g., facial scarring, dental work) that may affect the respirator fit.

## 7.0 Respirator Use Procedures

**7.1 Use Requirements:** Employees must use respirators in situations where exposure to airborne contaminants cannot be adequately controlled by engineering or administrative controls. Supervisors will ensure that employees adhere to proper respirator use.

**7.2 Facepiece Seal Protection:** Employees using tight-fitting respirators must ensure a proper seal by following these guidelines:

- No facial hair that interferes with the respirator seal.
- No wearing of glasses or PPE that disrupts the facepiece seal.

**7.3 Emergency Respirator Use:** In the event of an emergency (e.g., chemical release, fire), employees must use the appropriate emergency respirators such as SCBAs. Emergency respirators must be inspected monthly and stored in a readily accessible location.

## 8.0 Respirator Maintenance and Care

**8.1 Cleaning and Disinfection:** Respirators must be cleaned and disinfected after each use following the manufacturer's instructions. Shared respirators must be cleaned and disinfected after each shift.

### 8.2 Inspection:

- Respirators must be inspected before each use and during cleaning.
- Emergency-use respirators (e.g., SCBA) must be inspected monthly and after each use.
- Inspection should include checking for damage, wear, and proper function (e.g., cracks in the facepiece, loose valves).

**8.3 Storage:** Respirators must be stored in a clean, dry, and sanitary location, protected from damage, contamination, and environmental conditions that could affect the integrity of the respirator.

**8.4 Repair and Replacement:** Respirators that fail to pass inspection must be removed from service and either repaired or replaced. Only qualified personnel will perform repairs using manufacturer-approved parts.

## 9.0 Training

**9.1 Initial and Annual Training:** All employees required to use respirators must receive training before their initial assignment and annually thereafter. Training will cover:

- The need for respiratory protection and the risks of non-compliance.
- The correct use, donning, and doffing of the respirator.
- The limitations and capabilities of the respirator.
- Proper maintenance, cleaning, and inspection.

**9.2 Refresher Training:** Refresher training will be provided if:

- The employee demonstrates inadequate knowledge or improper use of the respirator.
- There are changes in the types of respirators used or workplace conditions affecting respirator use.

## 10.0 Program Evaluation

**10.1 Annual Program Review:** The SECC will evaluate the effectiveness of the Respiratory Protection Program annually, making necessary adjustments to improve safety and compliance.

This review will include employee feedback, assessment of exposure levels, and the effectiveness of respirator use.

### **10.2 Recordkeeping:**

- Medical evaluations, fit test results, and training records will be maintained for each employee.
- Records must be retained for the duration of the employee's employment, plus an additional 30 years.

## **11.0 Contractor Compliance**

All contractors working at Bowie State University are required to have their own respiratory protection programs in compliance with OSHA standards. Contractors must provide proof of training, fit testing, and medical clearance upon request.

## **12.0 Program Review and Updates**

This respiratory protection program will be reviewed and updated annually or as necessary to reflect changes in job tasks, equipment, or regulations.

### **Appendix A: Job Hazard Assessment Form Template**

### **Appendix B: Respirator Selection Guide**