

TOOLBOX TALK

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION: EP17

Ensuring Respiratory Safety – Fit, Materials, and Maintenance

Many workers find some respirators easier to breathe through—but that could indicate a poor fit. When a respirator has gaps around the edges, unfiltered air enters, reducing protection. A properly fitted respirator creates a secure seal, which might feel slightly restrictive at first but ensures safe breathing.

Regular Inspections & Maintenance Before each use, inspect your respirator for:

- ✓ Deformities or cracks in the material.
- ✓ Wear and tear on inhalation/exhalation valves.
- ✓ Properly seated cartridges.
- ✓ Signs of material delamination (breaking down).

Neglecting maintenance can lead to harmful particles being inhaled. Daily wipe-downs and weekly thorough cleanings help extend the life of the respirator and ensure user safety.

- **Materials Used in Respirators:** Typically made from thermoplastic elastomer or silicone.
- **Silicone Advantage:** A safer option for those with latex allergies.
- **Risk of Low-Quality Materials:** Recycled or low-quality materials can break down over time, reducing protection.
- **Best Practice:** Choose respirators made with virgin plastics for durability and long-term safety.



Standards & Compliance:

Respiratory protection must comply with recognized safety standards. For example:

- EN 140 – Half-face reusable respirators.
- EN 136 – Full-face respirators, which also protect the eyes.
- EN 14387 – Gas and vapor filter cartridges tested against chemical families rather than individual substances.

Need Help?

One of our experts are available to assist with your respiratory requirements

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