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Safety Directors Meeting  
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### Respiratory Protection

Jerry Halford of Respiratory Protection Services, Inc. made a presentation that was more like a directed discussion about respiratory protection needs for companies. Although he was clearly selling his services, he gave us some compelling reasons for biting some bullets. Two examples:

1. A Texas company had to contract personnel in to clean a tank. They both had beards and were using pressure demand units (hoselines). Both died from H<sub>2</sub>S exposure. Both hoseline units were in poor condition.
2. A Beaumont, Texas law firm is soliciting information from employees via their unions on specific incidences of respirator program deficiencies. They are establishing files to condemn the companies by information supplied by union members.

Example 1 has nearly broken the company involved and they may go out of business.

He said that respiratory protection is employee and company protection. The following guidelines were offered.

- Define our respiratory protection program point by point following OSHA 1910.134. I think our program does this but can be improved in the next issue (1st Qtr., 1985).
- Educate our supervisors to make sure we do not deviate from our program.
- Evaluate each job - if it can require a respirator, a physical is mandatory.
- Adopt a facial hair policy! This is because a pressure demand respirator is not capable of performing in accordance with manufacturer specifications if worn with a beard. Under exerted work loads, a pressure demand respirator will only maintain a 1/2" water column pressure inside the mask. Any leakage could cause the pressure inside the respirator to go negative. Problems that can go along with this policy are corrective lens requirements (>20/50) and PFD's (pseudofolliculitis). PFD is a skin condition typically found among blacks who suffer ingrown beard hairs from staying clean shaven. The only solution is to allow the employee to have a 1/8 - 1/4" beard AND to treat the condition as a medical impairment.
- Baltimore and LAB plants now have facial hair policies.

As part of our regular air pack testing, we need to add bench performance testing. This is something we can do on the II2 (older units) here in the plant. The newer version, the 2.2, does not have a bench test kit. TGG is gathering information on what it takes to do this.