QUALITATIVE RESPIRATOR FIT TEST PROTOCOL FOR OSHA SPECIFIC REGULATED MATERIALS

(Benzene/Asbestos Osha)

GENERAL BACKGROUND

The OSHA general respirator standards (29CFR 1910.134) provides for either qualitative (QLFT) or quantitative (QNFT) fit testing. Material specific standards (e.g., asbestos, benzene, formaldehyde) introduced after the general standards were established also allow for QNFT or QLFT.

The test shall not be conducted if there is any hair growth between the skin and the facepice sealing surface or if prior medical approval has not been given.

Anyone experiencing difficulty in breathing during the tests will be referred to a physician.

The test subject shall be given the opportunity to wear the successfully fitted respirator for a period of two weeks.

A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) or equivalent information shall be available and reviewed for fit-test agent - isoamly acetate, irritant fume, or saccharin - used.

RESPIRATOR SELECTION FOR FIT TESTING

1. The test subject picks the most comfortable respirator from various sizes (small, medium and large if available)from different manufacturers. Usually, the plant or area will designate the respirator(s) to be used and fit tested.

2. Prior to the selection process, the test subject is shown how to put on a respirator, how it should be positioned on the face, how to set strap tension and how to determine a comfortable fit. A mirror is available to assist the fit and positioning of the respirator.

3. The mask is donned and worn at least five minutes.

4. After the 5 minute period, comfort is assessed by reviewing the following points:
   a. Position of the mask on the nose.
   b. Room for eye protection.
   c. Room to talk.
   d. Position of mask on face and cheeks.
   e. Chin properly placed.
   f. Adequate strap tension, not overly tightened.
   g. Tendency of respirator to slip.
   h. Respirator of proper size to span distance from nose to chin.

5. Perform a negative and positive pressure check.