



Fit testing your respirator

To protect you, your respirator must fit properly and form a good seal on your face. A fit test is done to check that contaminated air cannot leak into your respirator and be inhaled. To ensure a good fit, nothing, including eyeglass frames, head coverings or beards, sideburns, or stubble must come between your respirator and your skin where your respirator seals with your face.

When must you do a fit test?

- Before you use your respirator the first time
- At least once a year
- If you experience physical changes, such as weight gain or loss or broken facial bones, that could affect the respirator's fit

How do you do a fit test?

- Be clean shaven.
- Put on your respirator as you would for your usual work conditions – for example, your straps should be as tight as they usually are when you are working.
- Wear all the other equipment (such as glasses or goggles, hearing protection, and hard hat) you will have to wear when you are wearing your respirator.
- Seal check your respirator, using either a positive or negative pressure check.
- The tester will put a test agent that causes a taste, irritation, or smell into the air around the seal on your respirator (you may have to wear a special hood). Breathe in and report whether you can taste, feel, or smell the test agent. Instead, the tester may use special measuring instruments to determine whether there is any leakage into your mask.
- Sign the fit-test form to indicate that the test has been done.



Fit testing for a disposable respirator using a special hood

For more information see the WorkSafeBC publication *Breathe Safer*.