



Fire Fighting Classes

Facial Hair – No Interference with Facepiece Seal

In order to complete the demonstrations safely, strict interpretation of the following regulations will be applied and facial hair should be trimmed or removed accordingly so as not to interfere with the facepiece seal:

1. Occupational Safety & Health – Title 29 CFR 1910.134
 - a. Facepiece Seal Protection
 - i. The employer shall not permit respirators with tight-fitting facepieces to be worn by employees who have:
 1. Facial hair that comes between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face or that interferes with valve function; or
 2. Any condition that interferes with the face-to-facepiece seal or valve function.
 - ii. If an employee wears corrective glasses or goggles or other protective equipment, the employer shall insure that such equipment is worn in such a manner that does not interfere with the seal of the facepiece to the face of the user.
 - b. Additionally, when discussing the fit test requirements, OSHA states:
 - i. The test shall not be conducted if there is any hair growth between the skin and the facepiece sealing surface, such as stubble hair growth, beard, mustache or sideburns which cross the respirator sealing surface.
2. National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1500: Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety & Health Program, 1997 Edition, Section 5-3.10:
 - a. Members who have a beard or facial hair at any point where the SCBA facepiece is designed to seal with the face, or hair that could interfere with the operation of the unit, shall not be permitted to use respiratory protection at emergency incidents or in hazardous or potentially hazardous atmospheres. These restrictions shall apply regardless of the specific fit test measurement that can be obtained under the test conditions.
3. National Institute of Occupational Health & Safety in the NIOSH Guide to Industrial Respiratory Protection:
 - a. Facial hair that lies along the sealing area of the respirator, such as beards, sideburns, moustaches or even a few days growth of stubble, should not be permitted on employees who are required to wear respirators that rely on a tight facepiece fit to achieve maximum protection. Facial hair between the wearer's skin and the sealing surface will prevent a good seal.
4. American National Standards Institute (ANSI) – Z88.2-1992 (Respiratory Protection):
 - a. A respirator, either positive or negative pressure, equipped with a facepiece (tight or loose fitting) shall not be worn if facial hair comes between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face or if facial hair interferes with the valve function.