



Respirators

Structure Construction (SC) employees may be required to wear respirators during certain construction operations, such as methacrylate or polyester concrete placement operations, removal of lead-based paint, in certain confined space situations, or when working with other hazardous materials, such as asbestos or animal wastes.

Cal/OSHA General Industry Safety Orders, Section 5139–5155, provides safety guidance when working with dust, fumes, mists, vapors and gasses. Respiratory protection plans are mandatory and must provide a comprehensive approach to respirator use training. The *Cal/OSHA General Industry Safety Orders* are available at the Cal/OSHA webpage¹.

The State policy for respirator use acknowledges the *Cal/OSHA General Industry Safety Orders* and outlines the requirements for respiratory protection plans in Chapter 15, *Respiratory Protection Program*, of the *Caltrans Safety and Health Manual*, which is available on the Health and Safety webpage².

The *SC Code of Safe Practices* identifies several situations where respirator use may be required and is available on the SC webpage under the Safety tab³.

A variety of air-purifying respirators, ranging from disposable dust masks to air-supplied, positive-pressure, full-face piece respirators may be required in the construction environment. The contaminant and percentage level of contaminant in the air determines respirator choice. Refer to project Special Provisions for predetermined exposure protection requirements, any applicable Material Safety Data Sheets, and Cal/OSHA regulations (refer to the Cal/OSHA web site listed above to search for regulations). Unknown materials can be encountered on the work site. Contact your Safety Officer and/or Caltrans Hazardous Materials Environmental staff for assistance identifying any questionable substances. For most situations, suitable respiratory protection can be obtained through the SC HQ Equipment Coordinator or SC Safety Liaison. Respirator fit testing will be provided by the District's Construction Safety Coordinator. Respirator medical evaluation, training, and fit testing are required initially (prior to first use) and annually thereafter. Contact the SC Safety Liaison for forms and procedures on obtaining a respirator medical evaluation.

¹ <http://www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/sub7.html>.

² http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/opo/safety/safetymanual_toc.htm.

³ <http://onramp.dot.ca.gov/hq/oscnet/>.