

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING REVISIONS IN 1998 RESPIRATORY STANDARD

Effective April 8, 1998, OSHA has revised its 1910.134 standard for respiratory protection. To enable NCDA&CS to comply with these revisions, changes have been made to our Medical Certification Protocol and Respiratory Program Policy. To assist management in implementing the new requirements, I have stated the changes and how best to implement them.

1. Employees who voluntarily wear dust masks are no longer included in NCDA&CS' respirator program. This means they are not required to have medical exams or fit tests. Employees required to use dust masks are to be fit tested and receive medical certification.
2. Annual fit tests are required where as before biennial fit tests were being conducted. To better administer the more frequent tests, the safety director will train selected employees on the proper methods in fit testing so each affected division can do the fit tests as required. Due to the need to provide several different types of respirators for initial fit testing, however, the safety director will still conduct the initial fit test. Banana oil will be the only test chemical used by division fit testers (no irritant smoke).
3. Medical Certification - procedures for medical certification have been completely revamped. Physicians or health care professionals currently being used will continue to be used.
 - a) Frequency - two and four year frequencies will no longer be followed. Starting July 1, 1998, all employees due for a physical after that date will follow the new procedures detailed in the Medical Protocol. For those employees who are due for a medical reevaluation in 1999 or later, all will receive a medical evaluation in 1999 following the new protocol. For example, a 23 year old employee has a medical evaluation in March, 1998. He would, under the old requirements be due for a reevaluation in March, 2002. Under the new requirements, however, he will be receiving a reevaluation sometime in 1999. Unless the physician or other factors require the employee to be medically recertified sooner, the standard interval for medical recertification is once every 5 years after initial medical certification using the new protocol.
 - b) When an employee goes to the physician for a medical exam, he/she must bring:
 1. a completed Section A of **NCDA&CS' Periodic Medical Questionnaire (Appendix A)**;
 2. a blank copy of the **Physician's Opinion Letter (Appendix B)** with the top portion filled out by the employee;
 3. a completed **"Respirator Use Profile" (Appendix C)** to be completed by the employee's supervisor.
4. Medical exams more frequent than the 5 year interval can be requested by the following people:
 - a) employee;
 - b) supervisor;
 - c) person conducting the fit test;
 - d) safety director;
 - e) physician.

Except for the physician deciding if the recertification frequency should be more than 5 year intervals, an approval (**Appendix D**) must be made by the safety director before a medical exam can be scheduled.