



Controlling exposures to prevent occupational lung disease

Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) Guidance 1/5

1. Selection and procurement



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If you have determined that RPE is required, you need to ensure that it is:

Adequate correct for the risk

Suitable matched to the wearer, the task and the environment

What is meant by 'adequate'?

You need to select the right type of RPE for the risk. Choose a type that has a sufficient level of performance to reduce exposure to an acceptable level.

Exposure levels for different hazards are set by safe Work Australia, www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/.

There are many types of contaminants that workers can be exposed to and which require the use of respiratory protection. The filter you need will depend on the contaminant - there isn't one type that can be used for all contaminants.

Types of RPE

There are two main types of RPE: filter respirators and air supplied respirators.

Filter Respirators

Filter respirators can be disposable or reusable and are the most commonly used in everyday work situations. They usually have a choice of filters for use against different hazards. Filters are certified to different classes depending on their efficiency or capacity, and you will need to ensure you select the right class.



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Air Supplied Respirators

Air supplied respirators consist of breathing apparatus which supply air from an independent source, such as a cylinder or air compressor. These can be used against a wider range of airborne hazards and in different atmospheres.



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