



# Syracuse University Environmental Health and Safety Services

## Guidance for Voluntary Use of a Respirator for Animal Use Activities

Syracuse University (SU) has an Animal User Health and Safety Program (AUHSP) to help minimize the risks of occupational injury and illness by controlling or eliminating recognized hazards associated with laboratory animal care facilities. All laboratory personnel working with animals must be enrolled in the AUHSP and complete and submit a Medical Risk Assessment Form for review by a healthcare professional (contact the LAR Manager at 443-1690 for more info regarding the AUHSP). As part of the medical risk assessment, the health care professional should evaluate if respiratory protection is warranted for the animal use activity(s) to be performed.

If respiratory protection is recommended by a health professional or if airborne hazards associated with an animal use related activity(s) have the potential to exceed an established occupational exposure limit, respirator use will be required for that activity(s) (required respirator use). Individuals required to use a respirator must enroll in the University's Respiratory Protection Program. These individuals will be required to receive respirator training and fit testing, further medical evaluation, and will be provided with an appropriate respirator at no cost. Contact EHSS at 443-4132 for more information or to enroll in the University's Respiratory Protection Program.

In situations where respiratory protection is not required, laboratory personnel working with animals may choose to voluntarily wear a N95 respirator (voluntary respirator use). Voluntary use of N95 respirators may only occur for activities where airborne hazards do not exceed established occupational exposure limits and respirator use is not recommended by a medical professional or required by Syracuse University EHSS. Voluntary use of an N95 respirator does not require enrollment in the University's Respiratory Protection Program. However, individuals choosing to voluntarily use an N95 respirator must acknowledge their decision to voluntarily use a N95 respirator and their understanding of the requirements associated with voluntary use, by completing the Voluntary Respiratory Use Acknowledgement form and submitting it to their supervisor.

### **N95 Style Respirators**



N95 respirators are typically the most common and effective type of respirator to use for filtering respirable animal allergens (i.e. hair, dander, saliva, urinary proteins). N95 respirators are available in various styles and sizes.

N95 respirators may only be used to control exposure to particulates (i.e. dust) and animal allergens (i.e. dander, hair, urine protein). N95 respirators are not effective for protecting against chemicals, gases, or vapors and do not supply oxygen.

### **Voluntary N95 Respirator Use Requirements**

#### **Laboratory Supervisors in Areas Where Voluntary N95 Respirator Use is to Occur Must:**

- Ensure personnel working with animals are participating in the University's AUHSP
- Ensure personnel choosing to voluntarily wear an N95 respirator have a Medical Risk Assessment reviewed by a healthcare professional and the healthcare professional has not recommended/required respirator use for the animal use activity(s) to be performed.
- Clearly define the task(s) for which the voluntary N95 respirator use is allowed.
- Ensure that individuals performing activities where respirator use is "required" are enrolled in the University's Respiratory Protection Program.
- Ensure personnel choosing to voluntarily wear an N95 respiratory receive a copy of SU's Guidance for Voluntary Use of Respirator for Animal Use Activities (which includes Appendix D to OSHA's 29 CFR 1910.134), and have completed and submitted SU's Voluntary Respirator Use Acknowledgement form.
- Maintain signed copies of the Voluntary Respirator Use Acknowledgment Form for all active voluntary use.

## **Guidance for Voluntary Use of a Respirator for Animal Use Activities**

### **Laboratory Personnel Choosing to Voluntarily Use an N95 Respirator Must:**

- Be enrolled in the AUHSP and have Medical Risk Assessment Form reviewed by a healthcare professional.
- Inform their supervisor of their decision to voluntarily use a respirator and identify the activities when voluntary respirator use will occur
- Review Appendix D to OSHA's 29 CFR 1910.134 standard, provided below
- Completed and submit the Voluntary Respirator Use Acknowledgement form
- Procure a NIOSH labeled N95 respirator. The cost of purchasing a N95 respirator(s) is the responsibility of the user.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's instructions provided with the N95 respirator
- Know the capabilities and limitations of the N95 respirator
- Properly use, maintain, and care for the N95 respirator
- Label and keep track of the N95 respirator and not share it with others
- Ensure the N95 respirator is worn appropriately, and has a good fit in direct contact with the wearer's face. Facial hair may hinder obtaining a good fit
- Notify the laboratory supervisor if experiencing adverse health effects or if any difficulties develop while wearing an N95 respirator

If you are unsure if respirator use is "required" for a specific animal use activity, ask your supervisor before entering the work area and/or performing the task.

Appendix D of the OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard, 29 CFR 1910.134, is provided below. OSHA requires that workers who voluntarily wear respirators, to be provided with a copy of Appendix D. Please review Appendix D below.

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### **OSHA 29 CFR Part 1910.134 - Appendix D**

#### **Mandatory Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the Standard**

Respirators are an effective method of protection against designated hazards when properly selected and worn. Respirator use is encouraged, even when exposures are below the exposure limit, to provide an additional level of comfort and protection for workers. However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. Sometimes, workers may wear respirators to avoid exposures to hazards, even if the amount of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by OSHA standards. If your employer provides respirators for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own respirator, you need to take certain precautions to be sure that the respirator itself does not present a hazard. You should do the following:

1. Read and heed all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and warnings regarding the respirators limitations.
2. Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. NIOSH, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.
3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designed to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter dust particles will not protect you against gases, vapors, or very small solid particles of fumes or smoke.
4. Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.

**for more information please contact EHSS at 443-4132.**

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## Syracuse University Environmental Health and Safety Services

# Voluntary Respirator Use Acknowledgement Form

## *Voluntary Use of an N95 Respirator for Animal Use Activities*

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I acknowledge that I intend to voluntarily use a N95 respirator for animal use activities at Syracuse University in accordance with the information and guidelines outlined in Syracuse University's Guidance for Voluntary Use of a Respirator for Animal Use Activities. I will ensure that my voluntary use of an N95 respirator complies with all voluntary respirator use requirements and that my supervisor has been advised of my voluntarily use of an N95 respirator. I will ensure that if I perform animal use related activities which require respiratory protection or if respiratory protection is recommended by my healthcare provider, I will notify my supervisor and enroll in the University's Respiratory Protection Program.

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Name

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SUI ID

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PI/Supervisor

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Animal Use Laboratory Location

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Reason for Voluntary Respirator Use (*describe activities to be conducted, location, type of containment, etc.*)

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Signature

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Date

**Completed Voluntarily Respiratory Use Acknowledgement forms must be submitted to the lab supervisor.**

**For more information please contact EHSS at 443-4132.**