General Information
Respiratory hazards in the workplace will be controlled whenever possible using engineering, work practice, or administrative controls. However, if these controls are not feasible or do not provide sufficient protection, employees may need to utilize respiratory protection. Employees who are required to use respiratory protection to perform their work activities must participate in the University Respiratory Protection Program.

A respirator is a device worn over the mouth, nose or the entire face to prevent inhalation of dusts, smoke, hazardous or noxious substances. OSHA General Industry regulations for respiratory protection is in 29 CFR 1910.134.

Before utilizing a respirator:
1. Respiratory Hazard Assessment – An assessment of the processes, equipment, materials, products and by-products, must be performed to identify potential exposure hazards. Contact EHS to has an assessment performed askehs@cornell.edu
2. Hazard Controls – Once a respiratory hazard assessment has been completed, the next step is to determine how to control the hazards.
   a. Engineering Controls – Controls that elimination the exposure all-together, like a fume hood or ventilation.
   b. Work Practice Controls – Controls that can be put into place for work processes, for instance, following standard operating procedures (SOPs).
   c. Administrative Controls – Controls that are administered by management. An example would be minimizing worker exposure times by scheduling or work rotations.
   d. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – PPE is the last line of defense against hazards. In this case respirators would be worn to prevent inhalation of harmful substances.
3. Respiratory Protection Program – Cornell University EHS develops, implements and maintains the Program
4. Medical Evaluation – For required use of a respirator personnel must complete the medical clearance process
5. Respirator Selection
   a. Air-Purifying Respirators (APR) – APRs are respirators that use filtering face pieces, cartridges, or canisters to remove contaminates from the ambient air you breath. Types include:
      i. N95 (Filtering Facepiece, Dust Mask)
      ii. Half-face
      iii. Full-face
      iv. Powered Air-Purifying Respirator (PAPR)
      v. Self-Contained Breathing Apparatuses (SCBAs) – Utilized by EHS only as they are used for high-risk activities including immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH) situations.
6. Training – Required Annually in person or online through CULearn course EHS 2381
7. Fit Testing – required before being able to wear a respirator is the fit test. A “fit test” tests the seal between the respirator facepiece and your face. In order to be properly fit tested, participants must be clean-shaven so facial hair does not disrupt the respirator facepiece seal to the face. An employee can only use the exact make, model and size of respirator(s) for which they have passed the fit test. Fit testing is required annually.
8. Respirator User Requirements
   a. Use the proper respirator, cartridges or canisters for the intended contaminants
   b. Do not wear a respirator with any facial hair that could disrupt the respirator seal with the face
   c. Follow the proper schedule for cartridge/canister replacement
   d. Inspect your respirator before each use
   e. Clean your respirator after each use
   f. Store your respirator in a sealed container
   g. Use only NIOSH approved respirators
   h. Read all manufacture instructions before use
   i. Perform a user seal check after donning
   j. Follow proper sanitation procedures after each use