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## What is an elastomeric half-face respirator?

Elastomeric half-face respirators are reusable respirators that use special cartridges designed to filter contaminated air before it is inhaled. When there is a good seal between the respirator and the face, air is pulled through the cartridge filter and the contaminant is removed by the packing material. Air-purifying respirators are only for use in areas where oxygen in the room is at normal ambient concentrations.

For use to prevent particulates, mists, and bio-aerosols, a high efficiency particulate air filter (HEPA) cartridge is used. These are referred to as P100 cartridges (P = all particulate aerosols, 100 = 99.97% filtering efficiency level of particulates). Chemical cartridges are used against gases and vapours. Combination cartridges can be used if fumes/particulate may be present in addition to the chemical hazard.

Your local OHSE Consultant will assist you and the department with selection of the appropriate model and size.

## Do I need to be fit tested?

Yes. Fit testing must be done prior to use, and annually thereafter. Another fit test may be required if:

- There is a change in respirator (e.g. brand, reathing

if otherwise specified by  
annually every 3 months).

## How do I store the respirator?

When storing respirators, they must be protected against contamination, dust, heat and deformation.

After inspection and cleaning, respirators must be:

- Stored in a clean air environment in sealable plastic bags (e.g. large Ziploc™ bag).
- Respirators shall be stored in a manner that will prevent deformation of rubber or other elastomeric parts. Respirators must not be stored in an area where something may be piled on top of it.
- Readily available for use.

## Additional Information

- University of Victoria OHSE Respiratory Program
- WorkSafeBC ([www.worksafebc.com](http://www.worksafebc.com))
- 3M Technical Data Bulletin #150 (September 2001)
- 3M Guidelines for Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting Reusable Respirators and Powered Air Purifying Respirators (June 16, 2009)

If you require additional information, please refer to the [OHSE Respiratory Protection Program](#) online, or contact Graham Rhodes, OHSE Consultant. [grhodes@uvic.ca](mailto:grhodes@uvic.ca)

