

ESSR FACT SHEET

How do we protect our UMD community from potential respiratory hazards in our work environment? When atmospheres are identified as harmful anywhere where work is performed on our campus, we implement the controls necessary to protect our employees.

There are several ways to control respiratory hazards. Below shows the “hierarchy of controls” which is a structural method for keeping employees safe from any occupational hazards. The hierarchy may apply to respiratory protection as shown here:

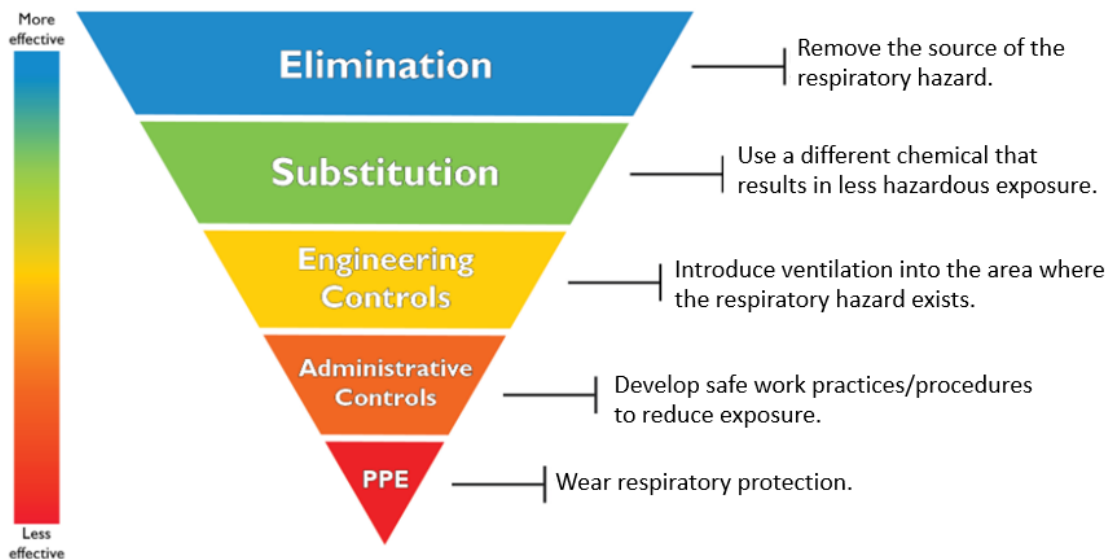


Image adapted from National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hierarchy/default.html>. Note: Associated examples were added by ESSR Occupational Safety and Health Unit for this Fact Sheet.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration [requires that other control measures be used the maximum extent possible](#) before respirators are worn.

ESSR’s Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Unit works with your department, and where concerns regarding respiratory hazards are identified, will analyze the work environment, conduct a hazard evaluation, and decide which protective measures are necessary to minimize exposures. The process is shown below:

1. An employee develops a concern about a respiratory hazard in an area.
2. The employee reports the concern to the supervisor.
3. The supervisor contacts ESSR's OSH unit at osh@umd.edu or (301) 405-3960 to report the work condition and receive assistance in conducting a hazard evaluation.
4. OSH and the affected unit conduct the Hazard Evaluation to determine if airborne hazards exist to merit control measures, and how the control methods may be implemented.
5. If control measures, are needed all personnel working in the affected area are provided the [Respiratory Protection Program](#) to review and understand the responsibilities of the department, supervisors, employees, and OSH.
6. The department implements the control measure(s). If respirators are deemed necessary, the following must be completed, in accordance with UMD's [Respiratory Protection Program](#) (all specifics are included in this program):
 - a. The employee must obtain a medical clearance by contacting the [University Health Center](#).
 - b. The employee must arrange for initial respiratory protection training with OSH.
 - c. The employee must have a fit test conducted for the respirator. The respirator to be used should be brought to the fit-test.

In the event that an employee wishes to voluntarily wear a non-elastomeric respirator, the employee may do so without medical clearance of fit-test; however, the employee must read and understand the section pertaining to "Voluntary Use" in the program.