



## **YOUR LUNGS LOOK TERRIBLE!**

*Have you ever had a doctor ask why you cough so much? Or why you smoke so much? Or why your voice is so husky? Maybe its because he thinks you may have throat/lung cancer. If you're working in construction, there is a good chance that your breathing in large quantities of dust, dirt, fuel vapors, paint fumes, etc. And there is an equally good chance that you have one or more respiratory diseases. What happened? When did it happen?  
Why did it happen?*

Several years ago, federal OSHA broadened its **Respiratory Standard (OSHA Subpart I—Personal Protective Equipment—1910.134, with APPENDIXES A—D)**.

**This Standard applies to almost every worker** in the construction industry, but many of us are in “denial.” Denial that we don't have perfectly good lungs, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with our respiratory system.

**This Respiratory Standard**, had it been in effect in the 1920's through the 1950's, would have revealed that over 50% of the coal miners in Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Kentucky, and surrounding states, had **BLACK LUNG DISEASE** (which was cancer of the lungs and entire respiratory system). These men died at a young age, most of them in their thirties and forties. That's sad.

**OSHA's Personal Protective Equipment Standard (1910.134)** requires most of us to wear some type of respiratory mask while we're sawing, chipping, grinding, sanding, excavating, painting, installing insulation, mixing cement, working in confined spaces, and a hundred other types of construction activities. **WHY?** Because we're inhaling life-threatening fumes that are damaging our lungs and entire respiratory system.

**Before many of us reach forty years** of age, while we won't have **BLACK LUNG DISEASE**, we'll have another type of respiratory disease. It'll be disabling, life-threatening, and result in a short life span.

### **Here's a digest of the 1910.134 Respiratory Standard**

#### **Requirements:**

##### **FIT TESTING**

- Administered by a qualified technician.
- Checks for levels of taste and smell.
- Determines what size respirator you would wear.
- Determines what type of “cartridge” you need to use to screen out certain respiratory pollutants.
- Provides use/storage/inspection respiratory protocols.

## **MEDICAL QUESTIONNAIRE**

- OSHA-designed form (150 questions regarding your respiratory history).
- Becomes part of your confidential Health Records.
- Requirements regarding need for chest X-rays.
- Questionnaire regarding family history of respiratory problems (smokers cough, throat cancer, etc.).
- Might result in your ability to work at certain construction trades (confined spaces, spraying of underbrush, painting, etc.).

## **WHEN TO WEAR RESPIRATORS (MANDATORY)**

- Confined Spaces
- Dusty Conditions
- Sawing/Chipping/Grinding/Drilling
- Painting (Spray, etc.)
- Asbestos Exposure
- Lead Exposure
- Demolition (lead, asbestos, cancer-causing agents, etc.)
- Dry-Wall Sanding
- Blowing Insulation (attics, basements, wall, etc.)
- Mixing Cement.

## **REASONS YOU MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO WEAR RESPIRATORS**

- Facial Hairs
- Scars on Face/Neck
- Pony Tail
- Long Hair
- Moustache
- Allergies
- High Blood Pressure
- Smokers Cough
- Asthma
  - Taste-Smell Impediment
- Prior History

## **TRAINING FOR RESPIRATORY PROGRAM**

- Required Annually
- Fit-Testing Procedures
- Use & Maintenance of Respirators
- Use of Respirators in Emergencies
- Differences Between Air-Breathing and Air-Supplied Respirators
- Maintenance and Storage of Respirators
- Medical Signs and Symptoms
- Jobsite Use of Respirators (MANDATORY)

*OSHA's Respiratory Standard is rapidly becoming one of OSHA's **TOP 10 MOST CITED VIOLATIONS**, primarily because both workers and employers are not familiarizing themselves with the need for respiratory protection on the jobsite.*

*If your job matches any of the respiratory conditions outlined in this **TOOL-BOX TALK**, you need to determine if your health and welfare in "on the line if you don't take steps to get into compliance. Remember, it's **MANDATORY**.*