# Voluntary Respirator Use Acknowledgement

*You have requested authorization to use a respirator on a voluntary basis during activities that may involve exposures to low-level, non- hazardous nuisance dust, odors or particulates. In accordance with the Cal/OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard (8 CCR 5144, Appendix D) we are providing you with the following information. After reading the information below, please complete the section at the end and return the form to your supervisor or Principal Investigator.*

The SFSU Respirator Program is managed by the campus EH&S office. Forward requests to use respirators for protection against hazardous air contaminants to sfehs@sfsu.edu

## Information for Employees Using Respirators When Not Required Under the 8 CCR 5144 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 (not OSHA). 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.
   a. SFSU requires dust masks (filtering facepiece respirators) to have NIOSH 95 Series* certification for protection against airborne particulates.
   b. Note that a N95 respirator provides limited protection against mold, spores, and pollen.

3. Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designated 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.

5. Replace when damaged, soiled, or whenever there is noticeable increased breathing resistance.

6. Dust masks increase breathing resistance. If an individual already has difficulty breathing, wearing a dust mask for work is not recommended. Consider contacting your health care provider if you have breathing concerns.

7. Check fit by adjusting straps and taking a deep breath. The mask should adhere snugly to your face.

The purchase or use of dust masks or surgical masks for health or other personal reasons is not subject to this program.

**Please complete the section below**

Name (print)

Department

P.I./Supervisor

Job/Position/Classification

Location of Use

Reason for using respirator (describe the nature of the work, type of dust, etc)

I have read and understand the information contained within this information statement and agree to abide by its recommendations. I understand that if I use this respirator (i.e., dust mask), it is voluntary and for comfort use only.

**Signature**

**Date**

A faculty or staff supervisor may not direct anyone to wear a respirator for protection against hazardous air contaminants unless that use has been evaluated by EH&S and the individual(s) have completed all parts of the respirator program process. A dust mask for comfort use may only be issued to a person who has signed this completed handout.