# Respirators
## *Maintenance*

**List breathing hazards on site**

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## Explain dangers

To provide protection, respirators must be maintained.

Dirty, missing, or damaged parts can prevent your respirator from working properly.

For instance, valves that are damaged, missing, or poorly seated can drastically reduce the protection provided by your respirator.

There's also a danger in sharing respirators. Doing so is not hygienic.

## Identify controls

Particulate respirator filters are identified by a letter and a number. The letters are

N – not resistant to oil

R – resistant to oil

P – oil-proof.

The numbers are 95, 99, and 100. These indicate efficiency: 95 (95%), 99 (99%), 100 (99.9%).

Filter cartridges for chemicals such as ammonia, organic vapours, solvents or acid gases use different filter technology. Look at the cartridge before selecting a respirator.

With use, filters become harder to breathe through. You're breathing not only through the filter but also through the contaminants that build up on the outside of the filter.

Change filters whenever the filter

- is damaged
- becomes difficult to breathe through.

As gas and organic vapour filters are used, their ability to remove gases and vapours decreases. They must be replaced according to a schedule set by the manufacturer.

Leave a contaminated area and change filters right away if

- you can smell or taste the contaminant through the filter
- your throat or lungs feel irritated.

## Demonstrate as you talk

Let's learn what to look for when we inspect a respirator.

Check the inhalation valves for damage, dust and dirt, and proper seating.

Remove filters and make sure the flapper valve (usually a flexible disk) isn't missing or damaged.

Make sure the flapper valve is seated properly in the valve assembly.

To inspect the exhalation valve, remove the cover at the bottom of the respirator. Check the valve for damage, dirt, and proper seating.

Make sure that straps and buckles are free of damage and working properly.

Check the facepiece for holes, cracks, and splits.

(With the crew, inspect two or three respirators in use. Make necessary adjustments and arrange repairs or replacements.)