

Use of Aftermarket Replacement Component Parts for NIOSH-Approved Respirators

Worker safety can be compromised by using replacement component parts or accessories that are not NIOSH-approved for the specific respirator. Although NIOSH-approved respirators are comprised of various component parts, they are approved as a complete unit. The use of components which are not part of the approved assembly results in a respirator that has not been evaluated and certified by NIOSH. This applies not only to parts supplied by other vendors, but also to those supplied by the original equipment manufacturer, if the component parts have not been evaluated by NIOSH as part of the respirator. Unevaluated respirator assemblies may not function at the expected level of protection, putting the worker at risk for exposure to airborne hazards. Manufacturers' quality systems confirm replacement components for use, fit and function, and ensure reliability and repeatable performance.

NIOSH issues certificates of approval for specific and complete respirator assemblies. The approval is granted after the respirator has been evaluated, tested, and found to be in compliance with all of the applicable requirements of the NIOSH regulations in Title 42, *Code of Federal Regulations*, Part 84. Manufacturers are required to have an effective quality assurance program that meets or exceeds the standard, and to control the important aspects of the components and their assemblies.

This guidance applies to all parts. Some of the more frequent issues include, but are not limited to:

- Cylinders used for SCBA air supply
- Airlines used for Supplied-Air Respirators

Unapproved parts are often found in partially reconditioned equipment.



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Worker safety can be compromised by using replacement component parts or accessories that are not NIOSH-approved for the system. Check with the respirator manufacturer to ensure that you are using the correct parts, designed for your specific respirator, when replacing component parts. The use of a non NIOSH-approved respirator places the employee at risk of exposure and employers at risk of citations and fines by OSHA.

For more information related to respirators, visit the NIOSH website www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl

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