

# UMS Safety Support Updates, News and Other Topics of Interest

## November 2016

### Topics in this newsletter

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- Spot the Safety Violation
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### This Month's Topic Reminder – Respiratory Protection Program Reminders

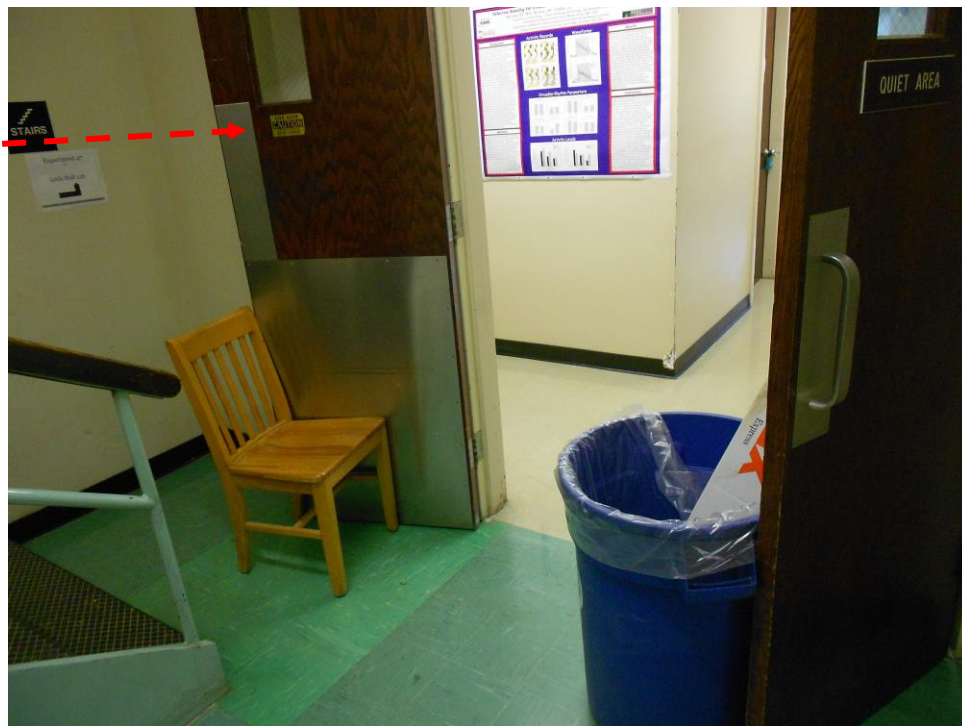
To supplement your written respiratory protection program, we offer some reminders that may be helpful to share with your employees.

- ✓ The employer must provide a medical evaluation to **determine the employee's ability to use a respirator** before the employee is fit tested or required to use the respirator in the workplace. Not all workers must be examined by a doctor. A physician or other licensed health care professional must perform the medical evaluation using the medical [questionnaire contained in Appendix C of 29 CFR 1910.134](#) or an initial medical examination that obtains the same information.
- ✓ Employees using tight-fitting facepiece respirators are required to **perform a user seal** check each time they put on the respirator. The fit test is a method used to select the right size respirator for the user – the user seal check is a method to verify that the user has correctly put on the respirator and adjusted it to fit properly.
- ✓ Tight-fitting facepiece respirators must not be worn by employees who have **facial hair** that comes between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face or that interferes with valve function. Respirators that do not rely on a tight face seal, such as hoods or helmets, may be used by bearded individuals.
- ✓ If an employee wears corrective **glasses or goggles** or other personal protective equipment, it must be worn in a manner that does not interfere with the seal of the facepiece to the face of the user. Kits are available from all respirator manufacturers that allow the mounting of prescription lenses inside the respirator. Contact lenses can be worn with any type of respirator, but their use is not recommended in dusty atmospheres while wearing a half-mask facepiece.
- ✓ Respirators must be **stored to protect them** from damage, contamination, dust, sunlight, extreme temperatures, excessive moisture, and damaging chemicals. They must also be packed or stored to prevent deformation of the facepiece and exhalation valve. A good method is to place them in individual storage bins. Keep in mind that respirator facepieces will become distorted and the straps will lose their elasticity if hung on a peg for a long time. Check for these problems before each use.
  - Storing the respirator in a **plastic sealable bag** after use is **not considered a good practice**. The respirator may be damp after use and sealing prevents drying and encourages microbial growth. If plastic bags are used, respirators must be allowed to dry before storage.

For any assistance or questions that you have about your Respiratory Protection Program, you may either contact our general office phone number at 581-4055, email us at [sem@maine.edu](mailto:sem@maine.edu), or view the staff contact listing at <http://sem.umaine.edu/our-staff/>



## Spot the Safety Violation(s)



*UMS campus work-area image(s)*

*NOTE: When we observe these hazards, we immediately notify the area supervisor or the campus Facilities Management.*

## What Were They Thinking?



Respirator? Face shield?

NOT UMS campus work-area image(s)