

Wildfire Smoke Protection Plan - Appendix E: Filtering Facepiece User Seal Checks

Each employee who uses a filtering facepiece respirator must perform a user seal check to ensure that the respirator is properly sealed to the face each time the respirator is put on. Either the positive or negative pressure checks listed below or the respirator manufacturer's recommended user seal check method must be used.

1. **Instructions for positive pressure user seal check.** Once you have properly donned the respirator, place your hands over the facepiece, covering as much surface area as possible. Exhale gently into the facepiece. The face fit is considered satisfactory if a slight positive pressure is being built up inside the facepiece without any evidence of outward leakage of air at the seal. Examples of evidence that it is leaking could be the feeling of air movement on your face along the seal of the facepiece, fogging of your glasses, or a lack of pressure being built up inside the facepiece. If the particulate respirator has an exhalation valve, then performing a positive pressure check may not be possible. In such cases, a negative pressure check must be performed.
2. **Instructions for negative pressure user seal check.** Negative pressure seal checks are typically conducted on particulate respirators that have exhalation valves. To conduct a negative pressure user seal check, cover the filter surface with your hands as much as possible and then inhale. The facepiece should collapse on your face and you should not feel air passing between your face and the facepiece.

Correcting problems discovered during the seal check: In the case of either type of seal check (positive or negative), if air leaks around the nose, use both hands to readjust the nosepiece by placing your fingertips at the top of the metal nose clip. Slide your fingertips down both sides of the metal strip to more efficiently mold the nose to the shape of your nose. Readjust the straps along the sides of your head until a proper seal is achieved.