

Required Procedure for Cleaning Respirators

The procedures established for cleaning and disinfecting respirators can be found in Appendix B-2 of the respiratory protection standard, 29 CFR 1910.134.

PPE: Goggles and gloves should be worn when cleaning respirators.

1. Remove filters, cartridges, canisters, speaking diaphragms, demand and pressure valve assemblies, hoses, or any components recommended by the manufacturer. Discard or repair any defective parts.
2. Wash components in warm (43°C [110°F] maximum) water with a mild detergent or with a cleaner recommended by the manufacturer. A stiff bristle (not wire) brush may be used to help remove the dirt. If the detergent or cleaner doesn't contain a disinfecting agent, respirator components should be immersed for 2 minutes in one of the following:
 - A bleach solution (concentration of 50 parts per million of chlorine). Make this by adding approximately one milliliter of laundry bleach to one liter of water at 43°C (110°F)
 - Other commercially available cleansers of equivalent disinfectant quality when used as directed, if their use is recommended or approved by the respirator manufacture.
3. Rinse components thoroughly in clean, warm (43°C [110°F] maximum), preferably, running water.

Note: The importance of thorough rinsing can't be overemphasized. Detergents or disinfectants that dry on facepieces could cause dermatitis. In addition, some disinfectants may cause deterioration of rubber or corrosion of metal parts, if not completely removed.
4. Drain components.
5. Air-dry components or hand dry components with a clean, lint-free cloth.
6. Reassemble the facepiece components. Replace filters, cartridges, and canisters, if necessary (for testing)
7. Test the respirator to make sure all components work properly.