

## Appendix B

### Voluntary Respirator Use Program

Respirators are an effective method of protection against certain airborne hazards when properly selected and worn. Respirator use is encouraged even when exposures are below the exposure limit, to provide an additional level of protection for workers.

However, if a respirator is used improperly or not kept clean and maintained, the respirator itself can become a hazard to the worker. Sometimes, workers may desire to wear respirators to avoid airborne exposures even if the amount of hazardous substance does not exceed the limits set by regulatory standard. If your department provides a respirator for your voluntary use, or if you provide your own respirator, you need to take certain precautions to ensure the respirator itself does not present a hazard.

You must do the following:

- Read and follow all instructions provided by the manufacturer on use, maintenance, cleaning and care, and the respirator's limitations.
- Choose respirators certified for use to protect against the contaminant of concern. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.
- Do not wear your respirator into atmospheres containing contaminants for which your respirator is not designated to protect against. For example, a respirator designed to filter out particulate matter will not protect you against gases or vapors.
- Keep track of your respirator so that you do not mistakenly use someone else's respirator.