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OSHA Proposes Updated Respiratory Protection Standard

by Gina Pugliese, RN, MS
Medical News Editor

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is proposing changes in its respiratory protection standard that was adopted in 1971. The updated standard will incorporate technological advances and better define the essential elements of a respiratory protection program, said Joseph A. Dear, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and

Health. The proposal would require employers to develop a written respiratory program, establish appropriate procedures for respirator selection, provide medical evaluation for employees wearing respirators, conduct proper respiratory fit testing, train employees, and evaluate the effectiveness of the respiratory protection program.

A notice of the proposed standard was published in the November 15, 1994, issue of the *Federal Register*.

Public hearings are scheduled for March 7-24, 1995. Written comments must be postmarked on or before February 13, 1995, and should be submitted to the Docket Officer, Docket No. H-049, Room N 2625, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20210.

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