Subject: Respiratory Protection	
Topic: Fit Testing and Interfering Facial Hair	
Question: "I have been requested to perform respirator fit testing on an individual that has facial hair which interferes with the sealing surface of the respirator. Am I required to fit test this individual to prove that the selected respirator does or does not seal, or may I refuse to fit test the individual until they are clean shaven in the sealing surface portion of the respirator?"	

Answer: Sections 1910.134(g)(1)(i)(A) and (B) of MIOSHA Part 451, Respiratory Protection, specifically state the following:

> The employer **shall not permit respirators with tight-fitting facepieces to be worn by employees who have**:
>
> A. **Facial hair that comes between the sealing surface of the facepiece and the face or that interferes with valve function**; or
> B. Any condition that interferes with the face-to-facepiece seal or valve function.

Further, Part 451, Section (A)(9) of Appendix A, "Fit Testing Procedures (Mandatory)", states:

> The (fit) **test shall not be conducted if there is any hair growth between the skin and the facepiece sealing surface**, such as stubble beard growth, beard, mustache or sideburns which cross the respirator sealing surface. Any type of apparel which interferes with a satisfactory fit shall be altered or removed.

As such, to be compliant with the requirements of MIOSHA Part 451, a respirator program administrator must refuse to fit test any individual that has facial hair which will interfere in any way with the sealing surface of all respirators possessing tight-fitting facepieces.

Applicable Construction Safety Standard/Rule: N/A

Applicable General Industry Safety Standard/Rule: N/A

Applicable Occupational Health Standard/Rule: Respiratory Protection, Part 451, 29 CFR 1910.134
Link to standard → http://www.michigan.gov/documents/CIS_WSH_part451_54075_7.pdf

Additional Resources: For complimentary MIOSHA consultation please contact our office at (517) 284-7720 or submit a Request for Consultative Assistance (RCA).

Date Posted: December 11, 2015	**CLICK HERE TO READ DISCLAIMER**