

**Miller, Diane M. (CDC/NIOSH/EID)**

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**From:** Linda Parsons [lparsons@umwa.org]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, December 23, 2009 11:00 AM  
**To:** NIOSH Docket Office (CDC)  
**Cc:** dodell@umwa.org; diggerumwa@aol.com  
**Subject:** RIN: 0920-AA33  
**Attachments:** UMWA Comments on Proposed Rule for Total Inward Leakage Requirements for Respirators.pdf

Attached are the comments of the UMWA on the Proposed Rule for Total Inward Leakage Requirements for Respirators.

Thank you,

Linda Raisovich-Parsons  
UMWA Department of Occupational Health and Safety

# United Mine Workers of America



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December 23, 2009

NIOSH Docket Office  
Robert A Taft Laboratories MS-C34  
4676 Columbia Parkway  
Cincinnati, OH 45226

RE: RIN: 0920-AA33

Dear Sir/Madam,

Attached are the comments of the United Mine Workers of America on the Proposed Rule for Total Inward Leakage Requirements for Respirators.

We thank you for the opportunity to participate in this rulemaking procedure and ask that you forward our comments to the appropriate person(s) in the Agency for consideration.

Sincerely,

*Dennis O'Dell (RRP)*

Dennis O'Dell, Administrator  
Department of Occupational  
Health and Safety

**Comments of the United Mine Workers of America  
On the Proposed Rulemaking for  
Total Inward Leakage Requirements for Respirators**

The United Mine Workers of America has reviewed the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for Total Inward Leakage Requirements for Respirators. The focus of this proposal is to ensure that respirators perform adequately for different worker populations and that the particular respirator make and size performs adequately and provides a good fit to the intended user. For some worker and employee populations, a poor fit might not be acknowledged increasing the likelihood that the worker is not protected from their hazardous exposures. Most respirators are manufactured as one size fits all. Workers depend on respirators to protect them from many hazardous conditions such as airborne contaminants and toxins in the environment. A one size fits all approach will not sufficiently protect all workers who have different dimensional limits, such as women. This rule recognizes that respirators in many industries have not provided adequate protection to all workers, permitting those workers to be exposed to external toxins and contaminants due to respirator leakage. The UMWA commends NIOSH for recognition of this problem and for proposing rules to assure that all respirators fit the worker properly and provides the protection intended.

After reviewing this proposal, the UMWA believes the following issues should be considered for addition to the rule:

- Total inward leakage pass-fail should not be based on the type of respirator or intended use. If a respirator is needed, it should provide the user the best possible protection with no leakage. Any and all tests for these types of respirators shall be uniform and guarantee fresh air without contaminants to the user.
- NIOSH should not consider accepting TIL test results from independent laboratories. NIOSH should continue to use on set of rules for fit testing to keep standards uniform.
- The air supply and mask should not be approved as one unit. The mask, hose and air supply is a unit and needs to be approved as one. To separate would compromise the safety of the user and the integrity of the unit.

In conclusion, the UMWA appreciates the opportunity to comment on this rulemaking. NIOSH proposal recognizes that a one size fits all approach is not adequate where respirators are concerned. Much of the worker population is not protected adequately from leakage due to improper fit. The Union appreciates these effort to recognize and correct this problem.