

What are our priorities?

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Personal Protective Technology (PPT) Program works to evaluate, and improve equipment worn by workers and develop interventions to protect them from hazards. Technologies include respirators, protective clothing, gloves, eye, fall and hearing protection, hard hats, and sensors to detect hazardous substances. The PPT program works collaboratively with industry, labor, trade associations, professional organizations, and academia. The program focuses on these areas:

- Providing processes to ensure PPT meet the requirements of the appropriate standards. Respirator approval and post approval evaluation is especially important.
- Ensuring PPT effectiveness including research to evaluate performance, comfort, fit and usability
- Improving protection provided by all types of PPT by developing science-based standards, guidance and interventions

What do we do?

- Certify that new respirators meet minimum construction, performance, and respiratory protection standards before they enter the market
- Conduct site and field audits to ensure respirators continue to meet standards after approval
- Develop and implement science-based national guidance for respiratory and other PPT
- Develop new methods to test effectiveness of PPT for workers, including workers engaged in infectious disease work
- Create guidance and tools to help employers and workers use PPT as effectively and economically as possible
- Develop and evaluate innovative PPT designs and test methods to improve comfort, fit and usability

What have we accomplished?

- Completed 364 respirator certification decisions resulting in 733 new approvals
- Completed 173 site and product audits providing confidence that respirators are effective for their intended purposes
- Published new rule establishing an updated fee schedule for the approval of respirators
- Published the OSHA co-branded Respiratory Protection Program (RPP) Toolkit, a guide for hospital respirator program administrators
- Collaborated with The Joint Commission to develop a new educational monograph designed to assist hospitals in implementing their RPPs
- Led the scientific review and improvement of test methods for the performance evaluation of PPT to protect workers supporting the national and international Ebola response
- Led the national effort to conduct PPT evaluations to support the Ebola Response
- Responded to hundreds of PPT inquiries since September 1, 2014 to support the Ebola response
- Completed physiological evaluation of cooling devices submitted to President Obama's Grand Challenge
- Published four NIOSH Science Blog posts on PPT

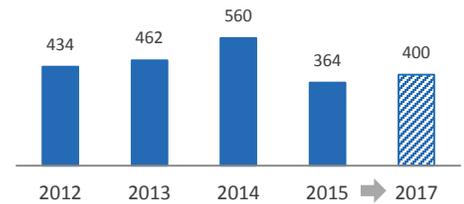
What's next?

- Develop test method and consensus standard on half facepiece, air-purifying particulate-only respirators
- Complete 350 respirator approval decisions and 200 audit activities in 2016
- Collaborate with partners including U.S. Federal Drug Administration to establish a unified respirator approval process
- Launch the personal protective equipment information (PPE-INFO) database for public use to start addressing the need for a national PPT clearinghouse
- Publish additional evaluation results of innovative PPT designs submitted to President Obama's Grand Challenge
- Develop three test methods to validate the scientific basis of PPT performance
- Complete anthropometric research as input to the National Fire Protection Association for selected fire apparatus and PPTs to update current standards
- Publish the framework for developing and managing conformity assessment of PPT used in U.S. workplaces

At-A-Glance

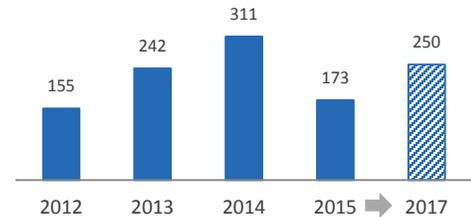
The Personal Protective Technology (PPT) Program is a world leader in keeping American workers safe through PPT research, standards development, respirator conformity assessment, public outreach and information dissemination. This snapshot shows recent accomplishments and upcoming work.

Number of respirator certification decisions



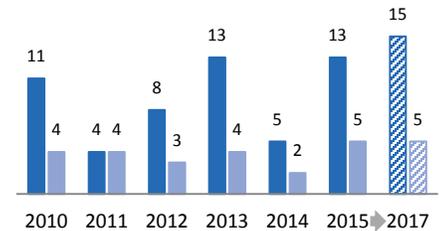
Source: NIOSH Program Records

Number of certified respirator audit activities for quality assurance



Source: NIOSH Program Records

Number of consensus standards developed using PPT Program participation and PPT Program data in standards development organizations



Source: NIOSH Program Records