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**From:** Jonathan V. Szalajda  
Acting Chief, Technology Evaluation Branch  
National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory

**Subject:** Update - Use Restrictions Lifted from NIOSH CBRN Respirator Approvals

## RESPIRATOR USER NOTICE

**BACKGROUND:** The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) receives testing support from the Army's Edgewood Chemical Biological Center's (ECBC) Test Laboratory. These services support the NIOSH respirator approvals providing CBRN protections.

On November 18, 2013, ECBC notified NIOSH of errors with some of its test data. ECBC's internal assessment of these data indicates that concentrations of the CWAs used in testing were less than that required by NIOSH test procedures. NIOSH made public notification of these testing deficiencies in a November 27, 2013 Users Notice. NIOSH then worked with ECBC's personnel in establishing a program for re-testing the affected respirator configurations. Re-testing was conducted during the period of January 2014 through March 2014, and the ensuing administrative work was completed during April 2014. Normal testing operations resumed following the retesting program.

**NATURE OF ACTION:** NIOSH has lifted the limited restrictions on affected respirator approvals advised in NIOSH's November 27, 2013 User Notice. One previously-granted approval for a respirator failed; however, this model of respirator had not been sold or distributed for use. The complete nature of the lone test failure is still under investigation, but the difference in test outcomes does not appear to be related to the reduced concentration of CWA in the original testing. NIOSH has restored all other respirator approvals affected by the testing deficiencies. No special restrictions remain on any of the listed protections. Successful retesting permits the joint approval of SCBA that are compliant with NFPA 1981, 2013 Edition, and those respirators are again being supplied to users.

**NOTIFICATIONS TO MANUFACTURERS:** Where re-testing has provided the proper substantiation, NIOSH has individually notified each manufacturer of the re-testing results and lifted the restrictions on labeling and distribution of those approvals. In particular, Scott Safety, who had sold or distribute some respirator configurations affected by the testing errors, was notified that successful retesting had provided the assurance needed to lift special use restrictions. With the single exception noted above in the "Nature of Action" section, NIOSH informed all other approval holders that their as-yet undistributed approvals have been cleared for labeling, sale and distribution.

**NIOSH ACTIONS:** NIOSH acknowledges the contributions of ECBC, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Safety Equipment Institute (SEI), Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency – Assistance to Firefighter Grant Program Office, and the affected approval holders in helping to fully resolve the impact of the testing deficiencies that occurred.