

Details on Fumigant Regulations on Respirators, Costshares, and Testing Services

Effective December 1, 2010, the following Respiratory Protection Requirements were implemented by EPA for methyl bromide, chloropicrin, metam sodium, and several other fumigants. (Similar requirements exist for Telone and Midas.)

- At least two handlers must have the appropriate air-filtering respirators and cartridges available at any fumigation event. These handlers must be fit-tested, trained, and medically examined, and this must be documented in the Fumigant Management plan.
- Handlers must either stop work and leave the area or use air-purifying respirators if they experience sensory irritation (this does not apply to formulations with greater than 80% methyl bromide)
- For formulations with greater than 80% methyl bromide handlers must wear air-purifying respirators during handling activities
- While handlers use respirators, air must be monitored to ensure concentrations do not exceed the upper working limit of respirators
- All handlers who will wear a respirator must be fit-tested, trained, and medically examined to ensure they do not have health problems such as a heart condition that could make use of a respirator dangerous
- Respirator and cartridges must be available for each handler who will wear a respirator.

Source: http://www.epa.gov/oppsrrd1/reregistration/soil_fumigants/#worker

In order to assist growers in complying with these requirements, medical clearance, respirator fit testing, and respirators/cartridges the NC Agrimedcine Institute will offer services at most NC strawberry preplant meetings.

Service	Total Cost	Reduced Cost
Medical Clearance (required) (on-line questionnaire reviewed by physician)	25.00	12.50 for NC residents
Pulmonary Function Test & Blood Pressure (optional)	25.00	12.50 for NC residents
Respirator Fit Testing (required)	25.00	12.50 for NC residents
Supplies	Approximate Retail*	Reduced Cost
Half Face air purifying respirator	\$ 14-23	10-40% off retail with an additional 50% off for NC residents
Full Face air purifying respirator	\$107-170	
Organic Vapor cartridges (pair)	\$11-18	
Acid Gas cartridges (pair)	\$22-29	
Organic Vapor/Acid Gas cartridges (pair)	\$20-25	

*cost dependent on manufacturer, model, and size (3M, MSA, or Scott-Tyco); prices subject to change by manufacturer

Obtaining Medical Clearance: The NC Agromedicine Project offers medical clearance via an online questionnaire that is reviewed by a physician prior to testing events. Deadlines for accomplishing this online questionnaire are generally one week prior to the event. Growers who wish to obtain medical clearance on their own (and only undergo fit-testing through the NC Agromedicine Institute project) must complete a medical evaluation by a physician or other licensed health care professional using a medical questionnaire or an initial medical examination that obtains the same information as the medical questionnaire (see [questionnaire](#)). While pulmonary function test & blood pressure are not required, both are recommended to ensure that there are no unforeseen medical issues as to why an individual may not be able to safely use a respirator.

A statement on physician's letterhead or prescription pad that medical clearance has been obtained and for what type of respirator (i.e., full face air purifying, half face air purifying, powered air purifying, etc) will be required prior to fit testing. Any limitations to respirator wear (i.e., respiratory issue, heart condition, high blood pressure, etc) must also be stated.

For more information about respirator selection, fit, and medical requirements:

- Contact Robin Tutor tutorr@ecu.edu or 919.880.4225
- Go to OSHA e-tools website <http://63.234.227.130/SLTC/etools/respiratory/index.html>

When selecting respiratory protection, remember:

- the chemical label is the law relative to type of respirator, cartridges, and other personal protective equipment required
- that individual health conditions may require a more sophisticated device (i.e., air supply vs. air purifying)
- in addition to air purifying respirators, a self contained breathing apparatus will be required for emergency purposes