



Phone: 412-386-4000
Fax: 412-386-4051

Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
National Institute for Occupational
Safety and Health (NIOSH)
National Personal Protective
Technology Laboratory (NPPTL)
626 Cochrans Mill Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15236

September 24, 2003

LETTER TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

SUBJECT: National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health Announcement of Two Public Meetings to be held on October 16, 2003. The meetings are being held to Initiate Conceptual Discussions for Powered Air Purifying Respirator Standards Development Efforts Used for Respiratory Protection Against Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) Agents, Docket Number NIOSH-010, and Quality Assurance Standards Module for Respiratory Protective Equipment, Docket Number NIOSH-001

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL) is planning to conduct two public stakeholder meetings on October 16, 2003. The CBRN Public Meeting will be held from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. and the Quality Assurance Standards Module Meeting will be held from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. at the Radisson Hotel at Waterfront Place, 2 Waterfront Place, Morgantown, West Virginia.

CBRN Topics

The purpose of the CBRN Public Meeting is to initiate conceptual discussions of standards and testing processes for powered air purifying respirator standards suitable for respiratory protection against CBRN Agents. NIOSH, along with the U.S. Army Soldier and Biological Chemical Command (SBCCOM) and the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), will present information to attendees concerning the concept development for the powered air purifying respirator CBRN standard. Participants will be given an opportunity to ask questions on these topics and to present individual comments for consideration.

Interested participants may obtain a copy of the powered air purifying respirator CBRN concept paper, as well as earlier versions of other concept papers used during the standard development effort, from the NPPTL web site, address: www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl. The September 15, 2003, concept paper will be used as the basis for discussion at the public meeting, as well as forming the basis for the new powered air purifying respirator CBRN statement of standard.

The continuing threat of acts of terrorism has created an urgent awareness of domestic security and preparedness issues. Municipal, state, and federal responder groups, particularly those in locations considered potential targets, have been developing and modifying response and consequence management plans. Since the World Trade Center and anthrax incidents, most emergency response agencies have operated with a heightened appreciation of the potential scope and sustained resources requirements for coping with such events. The federal Interagency Board for Equipment Standardization and Interoperability (IAB) has worked to identify personal protective equipment that is already available on the market for responders' use. The IAB has identified the development of standards or guidelines for respiratory protection equipment as a top priority. NIOSH, NIST, the National Fire Protection Association, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration entered into a Memorandum of Understanding defining each agency or organization's role in developing, establishing, and enforcing standards or guidelines for responders' respiratory protective devices. NIST initiated Interagency Agreements with NIOSH and SBCCOM to aid in the development of appropriate protection standards or guidelines. NIOSH has the lead in developing standards or guidelines to test, evaluate, and approve respirators.

NIOSH, SBCCOM, and NIST hosted public meetings on April 17 and 18, 2001; June 18 and 19, 2002; October 16 and 17, 2002; April 29, 2003; and June 25, 2003, presenting their progress in assessing respiratory protection needs of responders to CBRN incidents. The methods or models for developing hazard and exposure estimates, and the status in evaluating test methods and performance standards that may be applicable as future CBRN respirator standards or guidelines were discussed at these meetings.

Quality Assurance Topics

The purpose of the Quality Assurance Standards Module Public Meeting is to continue conceptual discussions for quality assurance standards for respiratory protective equipment. The concepts for the update of 42 CFR Part 84 to address quality assurance provisions, establish fees, improve labels and update certain administrative provisions were presented in a public meeting held on June 25, 2003.

Participants will be given an opportunity to ask questions on these topics and to present individual comments for consideration. Interested participants may obtain a copy of the quality assurance concept paper from the NPPTL web site, address: www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl. The July 21, 2003, concept paper and the information presented at the June 25, 2003, public meeting will be used as the basis for discussion at the October 16, 2003, public meeting. Responses to the comments received since the June 25, 2003, meeting will also be discussed.

NIOSH has the lead in developing standards or guidelines to test, evaluate, and approve respirators for use in occupational settings. International trade has led to changes in accepted quality assurance practice in manufacturing environments throughout the world. In attempting to keep respirator standards abreast of current manufacturing practice, NIOSH has met with the public and respirator manufacturers to receive input on the development of new respirator quality assurance standards. NIOSH hosted the most recent of these public meetings on June 25, 2003, where concepts developed up to that date were presented.

General Information

Interested parties should make hotel reservations directly with the Radisson Hotel at Waterfront Place (304/296-1700 / 1-800-333-3333) before the cut-off date of October 2, 2003. The following special group rates have been negotiated for meeting guests: \$66 per night for federal guests and \$79.00 per night for non-federal guests. You must reference the NIOSH National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory (NPPTL) Public Meeting to receive these special rates. There is no need to specify which meeting you will be attending.

Please confirm your attendance to either or both meetings by completing the enclosed registration form, marking the public meeting that you wish to attend, and faxing (304/285-4459) the form to the Event Management Office, or completing an electronic registration form from the NIOSH Homepage (www.cdc.gov/niosh) by selecting Conferences and then the event.

An opportunity to make presentations regarding the conceptual discussions of standards and testing processes for powered air purifying respirator standards suitable for respiratory protection against CBRN Agents and the conceptual quality assurance standards module will be given. Requests to make such presentations at the public meetings should be made by e-mail (npptlevents@cdc.gov) to the NIOSH Event Management Office. All requests to present should include the name, address, telephone number, relevant business affiliations of the presenter, a brief summary of the presentation, and the approximate time requested for the presentation. Oral presentations should be limited to 15 minutes.

After reviewing the requests for presentations, NIOSH Event Management will notify each presenter of the approximate time that their presentation is scheduled to begin. If a participant is not present when their presentation is scheduled to begin, the remaining participants will be heard in order. At the conclusion of the meetings, an attempt will be made to allow presentations by any scheduled participants who missed their assigned times. Attendees who wish to speak but did not submit a request for the opportunity to make a presentation may be given this opportunity at the conclusion of the meeting, at the discretion of the presiding officer.

Submitting Comments on CBRN or Quality Assurance

Comments on the topics presented in this notice and at the meetings should be mailed to the NIOSH Docket Office, Robert A. Taft Laboratories, M/S C34, 4676 Columbia Parkway, Cincinnati, Ohio 45226, Telephone 513-533-8303, Fax 513/533-8285. Comments may also be submitted by e-mail to niocindocket@cdc.gov. E-mail attachments should be formatted as WordPerfect 6/7/8/9 or Microsoft Word. Comments should be submitted to NIOSH no later than November 16, 2003, and should reference Docket Number NIOSH-010 in the subject heading for the CBRN Public Meeting and Docket Number NIOSH-001 in the subject heading for the Quality Assurance Standards Module.

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For further information, please contact the Event Management Office, 3610 Collins Ferry Road, P.O. Box 880, Morgantown, West Virginia 26507-0880 Telephone 304-285-4750, Fax 304-285-4459, E-mail npptlevents@cdc.gov.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roland J. Berry Ann" followed by a large flourish and the initials "RJB".

Roland J. Berry Ann
Branch Chief
Respirator Branch
National Personal Protective Technology Laboratory

Enclosure