NIOSH Respirator Approval Numbers

Most air-purifying respirators operate under negative pressure; that is, they rely on the power of the wearer's lungs to pull air through the filter elements. These include half-mask dust/mist respirators, half-mask dual-cartridge respirators, full-face dual-cartridge respirators, and canister-type gas masks. Dust/mist respirators and some half-mask dual-cartridge respirators are disposable. The only air-purifying respirator that operates under positive pressure is the Powered Air-Purifying Respirator (PAPR). It has a fan that pulls air through the filters and circulates it over the wearer's face

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) specifies minimum approval requirements for respiratory protective devices in Title 42 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 84.

**Part 1** — TC (Testing & Certification). All NIOSH approval numbers begin with the letters TC.

**Part 2** — Approval Schedule (set of standards). The numbers and letter indicate the set of standards applicable to a specific respirator type. These number/letter designations represent the original approval schedule (number) and revision level (letter) used by the U.S. Bureau of Mines (except for 84A). NIOSH uses the following designations:

* 13F: Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)
* 14G: Gas mask with canister
* 19C: Supplied air respirator (SAR)
* 23C: Air-purifying respirator (APR) with chemical cartridge or Powered-Air Purifying

respirator (PAPR) with chemical cartridge **&** particulate filter

* 21C: Powered Air-Purifying Respirator with (only) a particulate filter
* 84A: Respirator with particulate filter or combination chemical cartridge with particulate

filter

NIOSH reviews respirator approval applications, which contain technical specifications, drawings, and other related information. NIOSH also inspects, examines and tests the respirators to determine that the applicable requirements are met for individual, completely assembled respirators.

* These numbers help you identify which cartridges, airline hoses, or other respirator parts are approved for a specific respirator assembly.
* When replacing parts or making repairs, make sure to select only replacement parts listed under the TC number for the assembly chosen, otherwise, you will create a non-certified respirator assembly.
* Each respirator assembly has **one** TC number. If more than one TC number is listed on the approval label, this means more than one NIOSH-certified assembly is available.

Manufacturers of every pesticide are mandated to use criteria approved by the EPA to assign PPE respirator requirements on labels, spec sheets and SDS’s. The product formulation, toxicity, and type of application influence the type of respirator needed, thus the TC number assigned.