

Dust mask vs. respirators, can you tell the difference?

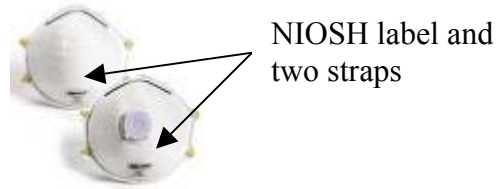
Dust masks are not NIOSH* approved disposable filtering facepieces. They can be worn for comfort against non-toxic nuisance dusts during activities like mowing, gardening, sweeping and dusting. These masks are **not** respirators and do not offer protection against hazardous dusts, gases or vapors.

Dust masks can be mistaken by NIOSH approved N-95 respirators. How can you tell the difference? Look for a NIOSH label printed on the box and/or mask. Also the use of the word “respirator” on the box may indicate it is a NIOSH approved respirator.

Dust “nuisance” mask



Typical N-95 Respirator



Please note that if you are using N-95 respirators for nuisance dust we recommend you discontinue their use and switch to dust masks.

Respirator wearers must to comply with all the requirements of the MSU Respiratory Protection Program which include : Medical certification, training and annual fit testing.

If you have questions or think you need a respirator please give the Occupational Safety Team a call at 355-0153. We can perform a respiratory hazard assessment of work tasks to determine whether respiratory protection is needed.

*NIOSH- National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services certifies respirators. A label or statement of certification should appear on the respirator or respirator packaging. It will tell you what the respirator is designed for and how much it will protect you.