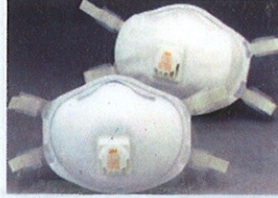




## 10 things you should know about disposable dust masks



- 1 All are "CE" marked to show they are to a recognised standard – EN 149:2001
- 2 They will also be marked with an additional code FFP1, FFP2, or FFP3 – the higher the number, the more protection the dust mask will offer if used properly
- 3 Other cheaper similar looking masks described as nuisance or comfort masks are **not** intended for use when proper protection is needed and are not marked "CE" and EN149 – play safe, do not use them for dusty work
- 4 Whatever dust mask you choose it must pass 3 tests (i) it must provide adequate protection (ii) it must fit you properly (iii) it must be compatible with other protective equipment you wear at the same time
- 5 FFP1, FFP2 and FFP3 are designed to filter out dust only. They must **not** be used where there is an oxygen deficient atmosphere or harmful gases and vapours
- 6 Dust masks do **not** filter out all the dust – FFP1, FFP2 and FFP3 masks reduce the amount of dust you breath by factors of 4, 10 and 20 respectively – if you could be exposed to high levels of dust from materials that contain crystalline silica (e.g. cutting concrete slabs, kerbs, tiles etc), a FFP3 mask will be necessary to provide adequate protection (in addition to other engineering controls)
- 7 A good fit relies on close contact between mask and smooth skin – a beard or stubble can reduce protection. The best way to check that the dust mask fits properly is through a fit test - at present this is the only way to meet legal requirements – a fit test will tell you if you are achieving an acceptable level of fit or whether it is unsuitable for you – your dust mask provider will tell you how to go about obtaining a fit test
- 8 A pre-use check should be carried out every time you put it on - you should always check that your dust mask is fitted according to the manufacturers instructions e.g. ensure that straps and strip for moulding the mask around your nose are correctly adjusted then hold the mask in place and breathe in or out sharply – if you detect any leakage around your face you should readjust the dust mask
- 9 Disposable masks should be discarded at the end of the shift or sooner if heavily contaminated
- 10 If spectacles, hearing protection or head protection interfere, a powered visor may be more suitable