



# Safety Share

## Assigned Protection Factor

The assigned protection factor (APF) gives the maximum level of protection provided by a respirator, if worn properly. The APF is critically important when choosing a respirator because it indicates what concentration will be effective. If a respirator has an APF of 10, a worker is protected up to 10 times the occupational exposure limit. If the conditions are greater than 10 times the exposure limit, a higher APF respirator is needed.

Acceptable level						Air-purifying options	APF	Atmosphere-supplying options
0	1	2	3	4	5			
					5	No air-purifying option available	10000	SCBA (pressure-demand) full-facepiece SCBA (pressure-demand) tight-fitting hood Multi-functional SCBA/airline
				4 to 5		Powered air-purifying full-facepiece Powered air-purifying helmet/hood with SWPF study	1000	Airline (continuous-flow) full-facepiece Airline (pressure-demand) full-facepiece Airline (continuous-flow) helmet/hood with SWPF study
			3 to 5			Powered air-purifying half-facepiece Air-purifying (negative-pressure) full-facepiece	50	Airline (pressure-demand) half-facepiece Airline (continuous-flow) half-facepiece
		2 to 5				Powered air-purifying loose-fitting facepiece/visor Powered air-purifying helmet/hood without SWPF study	25	Airline (continuous-flow) loose-fitting facepiece/visor Airline (continuous-flow) helmet/hood without SWPF study
	1 to 5					Air-purifying (negative-pressure) half-facepiece (including filtering facepieces)	10	No atmosphere-supplying option available
						No respiratory protection required	<1	No respiratory protection required

**Important:** The fit test method used will affect the APF. The maximum APF that can be achieved using a qualitative fit test is 10. For an APF greater than 10, a quantitative fit test must be used.