



Facial hair and respirators

If you wear a respirator that requires a seal with your face, you must be clean-shaven where the respirator seals with your face. This helps to make sure your respirator can protect you from breathing in contaminants.

What does “clean-shaven” mean?

- You must have shaved before the start of your shift.
- You may need to shave again during your shift if your beard grows quickly enough to interfere with your respirator’s seal.

You must be clean-shaven so your respirator seals with your face, protecting you from breathing hazards.



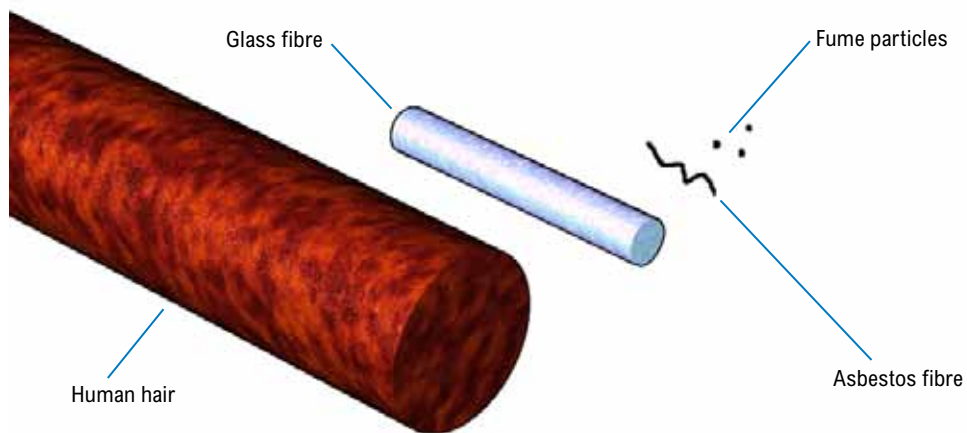
Does it really matter if there’s a bit of stubble on my face?

- Stubble prevents the mask from forming a good seal with your face.
- Stubble may seem small, but it is huge when you compare it with dust, mist, fibres, fume particles, and gas and vapour molecules.
- Stubble under the respirator seal creates plenty of room for contaminants to enter the mask.

Relative sizes of:

- A human hair
- A glass fibre
- An asbestos fibre
- Fume particles

If there is enough room for a hair between your skin and your respirator, there is room for many contaminants to enter.



For more information see the WorkSafeBC publication *Breathe Safer*.