



Carlisle Fire Company Inc.

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Office of the Fire Chief

Policy 4215-013

Policies and Directives

Facial hair policy [#2021-01]

OSHA Standards: *The Respiratory Protection standard, paragraph 29 CFR 1910.134(g)(1)(i)(A), states that respirators shall not be worn when facial hair comes between the sealing surface of the face piece and the face or that interferes with valve function. Facial hair is allowed as long as it does not protrude under the respirator seal, or extend far enough to interfere with the device's valve function. Short mustaches, sideburns, and small goatees that are neatly trimmed so that no hair compromises the seal of the respirator usually do not present a hazard and, therefore, do not violate paragraph 1910.134(g)(1)(i).*

In general, however, beards present serious problems for tight-fitting face piece respirators because their texture and density vary daily, causing unreliable respirator fit and, therefore, present a higher potential for leakage. However, some other types of respirators do not require a face seal, and thus, usually can be worn with facial hair, such as loose fitting powered air-purifying respirators and hooded powered air-purifying respirators.

No active firefighter shall be on duty with facial hair of sufficient length to potentially interfere with an individual's ability to maintain a safe mask seal with/while wearing a self-contained breathing apparatus. This policy applies to active firefighters occupying a seat in the apparatus which also houses a breathing apparatus inside of the seat and is expected to be worn. Noncompliance to this policy prohibits members from riding apparatus. Drivers/ Engineers will be at the discretion of the Chief Engineer for the facial hair policy.

- Brush 42, 42-10 and Rescue 42 (non SCBA) seats will not serve as apparatus to deviate from approved response card apparatus.

Beards, whether full or goatees, are authorized when;

- The beard or goatee must not interfere with the fitting and seal of the breathing apparatus face piece.
- The beard or goatee must not be worn below the jawline. The neck must remain clean shaven. (see illustration). Exceptions can be given to members who suffer from ***pseudo folliculitis barbae***, a skin condition where beard hairs curve back and penetrate the skin therefore causing a more serious injury. With this exception, a “couple days” growth is acceptable as long as the facial is still neatly groomed.
- The Fire Chief reserves the right to determine if ones beard or goatee is within or outside of this policy.
- This will not serve as a denial to receive fire points in the Carlisle Fire Company point system as stated in the By-Laws.
- Questions regarding this policy can be directly addressed to the Fire Chief.

