

## What are the types of fit testing available for respirators?

There are two types of respirator fit testing:

- **Qualitative Fit Testing (QLFT):** this test is subjective in nature as it uses the worker's taste sense to detect a non-hazardous challenge agent, and their honesty in admitting detection. A hood covers the worker's head while wearing the respirator, and Bitrex (bitter-tasting) or saccharin (sweet tasting) is sprayed into the hood as a challenge agent while a series of exercises are performed. The test fails if the challenge agent is tasted. QLFT might be ineffective for workers with head colds. QLFT cannot be used on tight-fitting full facepieces, or self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) system facepieces – these require the use of quantitative (QNFT) methods, and the facepiece must be tested in negative pressure mode irrespective of the mode it is used in on the job. Fit-Test New Zealand Limited does not offer QLFT.
- **Quantitative Fit Testing (QNFT):** this test is subjective in nature and it measures particle count inside and outside the respirator, while the worker performs a series of exercises, to check for leaks. QNFT can be used for the fit testing of all respirators that rely on a tight seal against the face. Fit-Test New Zealand Limited uses a calibrated PortaCount™ instrument, manufactured by TSI Instruments Limited for this test. Tight-fitting positive pressure facepieces, such as full facepieces on a powered air (PAPR) system, or self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) system, can only be fit tested using QNFT, and the facepiece must be tested in negative mode irrespective of the mode it is used in on the job. Fit-Test New Zealand Limited offers QNFT.

## Fit-Test New Zealand

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