

NATIONAL INTERAGENCY FIRE CENTER

3833 South Development Avenue
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June 23, 2020

NATIONAL FIRE EQUIPMENT SYSTEM CACHE MEMORANDUM NO. 20-03

To: National Interagency Support Caches (NISC)

From: David Haston, Chair – NWCG Equipment Technology Committee

Subject: N95 Respirators in NFES 1660 and 1675 Disease Barrier Kits

Background:

A SAFENET was recently submitted which reported that the face mask in a NFES 1660 kit was not a NIOSH-approved N95 respirator. The National Interagency Support Caches (NISC) carry the 1660 (single) and 1675 (10 person) disease barrier kits.

Discussion Points and Findings:

The COVID-19 pandemic has put increased visibility on related personal protection equipment and many of the support items are in high demand. Related to the SAFENET submission, inventory of NFES 1660 kits in at least one NISC contained a surgical style ear loop mask that is not a NIOSH-approved N95 respirator. It is important to note that N95 masks come in many form factors and are not necessarily marked in the same locations or look similar.

How to Identify a NIOSH-Approved Respirator:

NIOSH-approved filtering facepiece respirators (FFR) have an approval label on or within the packaging of the respirator (i.e. on the box itself and/or within the users' instructions). Additionally, an abbreviated approval is on the respirator itself. You can verify the approval number on the NIOSH trusted source page

https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/npptl/topics/respirators/disp_part/respsource.html to determine if the respirator has been approved by NIOSH.

Required Action:

For National Interagency Support Caches, inspect the NFES 1660 and NFES 1675 kits and replace any respirators that are not NIOSH-approved. During the inspection process ensure that any masks that have deteriorated such as discoloration and/or broken head straps are replaced. NFES 0131 N95 respirators can be used as replacements.

For all NISC customers, ensure that N95 respirators received from a NISC or purchased through other means meets NIOSH standards.



Additional Information:

The National Fire Equipment Subcommittee Chair is Matt Cnudde, 208-387-5277 or matthew.cnudde@usda.gov

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