

Experience of Quality Surveillance of Filtering Respirators in Japanese Market

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Filtering respirators are certified for their structures and functions by type test method based on government standards in Japan. However, the products of the respirators having passed the certification and shipped to Japanese market have had no chance to be confirmed if they continuously hold their intrinsic structures and functions. In 2000 fiscal year, Japanese government started the quality surveillance of filtering respirators in Japanese market. The Technology Institution of Industrial Safety was trusted to perform this surveillance in compliance with the standards. Up to 2005 fiscal year, 587 types of particle respirators and gas masks including the types of gas filter only were tested. At the end of 2005 fiscal year, the surveillance covered 36.1% of particle respirators and 46.4% of gas masks in the current market. The occurrence of defects found in the tested types, including structural and functional defects and wrong labeling, decreased from 30.3% to 10.5% along with the progress of yearly surveillance. This presentation includes the principle of Japanese market surveillance of respirators, the kinds of defects found on the products and the reasons speculated for the defects to occur in relation with the problems in industrial status of respirators.