

Seattle Company Puraka Masks Recognized by CDC for Meeting F3502 Standard for New Breathe Collection

F3502 masks are designed and tested to ensure they perform at a consistent level. These masks are labeled to tell you what standard they meet.

SEATTLE, WA, USA, November 15, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On November 12th, Seattle-based Puraka Mask's "Breathe" model mask was recognized by the US Centers for Disease Control's NIOSH division for demonstrating compliance with the ASTM-F3502-21 Barrier Face Covering requirements. Considered the national benchmark for reusable fabric masks, F3502 was developed by standards organization ASTM International, with input from NIOSH, to establish testing methods and performance criteria consumers can evaluate when deciding on a facemask to use in schools and workplace settings.



Puraka F3502 Breathe Mask Was Recognized by the CDC's NIOSH Division as a Barrier Face Covering

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Providing a CDC-endorsed F3502 mask is an easy way to show your students and workforce that you're looking out for their health and safety.”

Andrew Enke

In order to qualify as F3502-compliant, Puraka's Breathe Mask had to pass a series of rigorous laboratory tests. “We were honestly surprised at how hard it was to satisfy the test requirements,” said Andrew Enke, a mechanical engineer and company co-founder. “Our masks had to meet the filtration thresholds, but they also had to be more breathable than the inhalation and exhalation cap for medical respirators. Striking the right balance between filtration and breathability is harder than you would think.”

As one of just a handful of US companies making reusable face masks prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the team at Puraka leveraged their experience in wildfire smoke masks to help develop the new standard as an ASTM member, as well as to ensure its masks met the qualifications. "Our Breathe Masks exceeded the Level 1 requirements in both categories," said Lauren Chagaris, who has led the company as General Manager since the summer of 2021. "Because the mask design holds the filter away from your face, airflow resistance is minimized, even while the mask maintains an excellent seal for filtration." Test results for the Breathe Masks are available on Puraka's website, along with results from the company's "Essential" model masks, which achieved F3502 recognition earlier this year.

Under the F3502 standard, a barrier face covering must be tested by an accredited laboratory to show it meets certain performance requirements, including the degree to which it

restricts airflow, and how well it filters the very smallest airborne particles. "From a filtration perspective, sub-micron particles are considered the gold standard precisely because they are so hard to stop," says Enke. "[F3502 barrier face coverings](#) are designed to trap nanometer-sized particles in the same range as cooking oil smoke, or about the same size as the SARS-CoV-2 lipid envelope."

In addition to filtration and breathability, the standard also includes specific requirements for design and general construction, sizing and fit testing criteria, and labeling instructions. The label must state the number of laundering cycles the masks are tested for, as well as how the masks should be washed and dried.

"Because the United States was so late in producing a standard, we could use lessons from standards developed in other countries to help make sure the U.S. requirements reflected international best practices," says Chagaris. "The new standard is intended to apply to the



Puraka's Breath Masks Achieve F3502 Breathability Levels by Holding the Mask Surface Away from Your Face



Puraka Masks

general public and workers, which is why we expect F3502 barrier face coverings to become the standard-issue mask in workplaces and schools as we head into the winter."

Lauren Chagaris

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