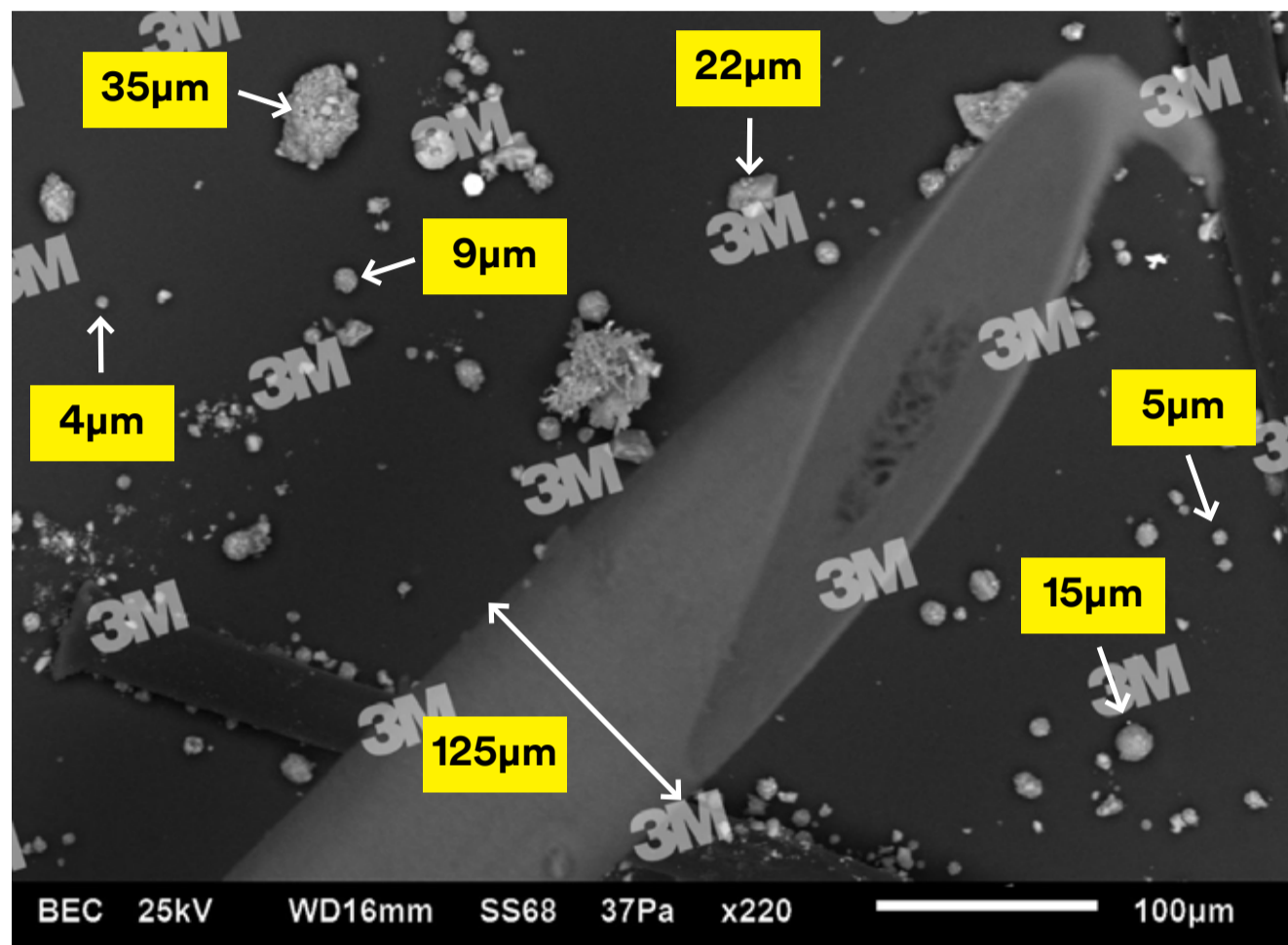
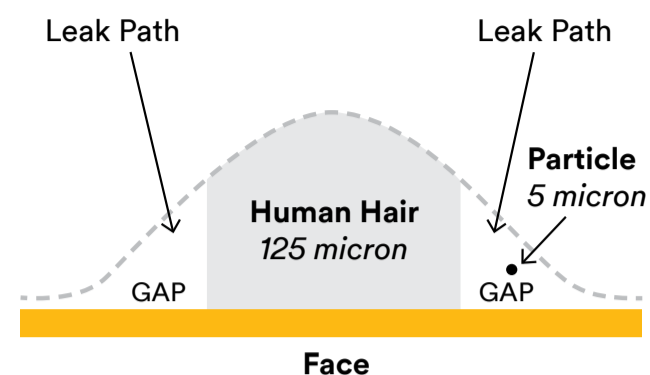


# Facial hair.

Being clean shaven is important to achieve respiratory protection.



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Airborne Contaminants can range from several microns (1 micron = 1/1000th mm) down to fractions of a micron. As the diagram to the left illustrates a human hair has an average thickness of about 125 micron. A single hair width will hold the mask off the face like a steeple and create enough space for the micron-sized particles, gases and vapours to leak past.

**Be clean shaven at the beginning of your work shift. Respirators are disposable...your lungs are not!**

*Particulates, gases and vapours can bypass facial hair that is preventing an adequate seal and still expose the wearer.*

- Studies have shown that the presence of facial hair can significantly reduce the expected levels of protection.
- Face seal leakage has been shown to increase from 20 times to 1000 times in the presence of facial hair.\*
- At least a 330 fold drop in protection was experienced by bearded wearers.\*\*
- Tight fitting respirators need to seal tightly to your face to create a reliable seal.
- Gaps in this face seal let the contaminated air inside your respirator.
- Respirator filters cannot clean the air that bypasses the filter and is leaking through the face seal.
- Even a day or two's growth of stubble/ moustache/ sideburn can be enough to significantly interfere with respirator fit and allow leak paths for contaminants to make their way straight into your lungs.