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Work Safely with Crystalline Silica

Your Top Ten Safety Tips

PROTECT WORKERS, CONTROL SILICA DUST

Crystalline silica is a basic component of soil, sand, granite and many other minerals used in construction. Silica dust is formed when workers chip, cut, drill or grind objects that contain silica, as well as during demolition. When inhaled, silica dust can put workers at serious risk of developing silicosis, cancer and TB. Health risks to workers can be greatly reduced when proper precautions are taken and exposure to silica dust is controlled.

YOUR TOP 10 WAYS TO BE SILICA SAFE

1. Be aware of operations and jobs that create crystalline silica exposures, and include exposure control plans during your job site safety assessment

2. Prevent silica dust from becoming airborne by using engineering controls to reduce exposures. Water sprays will suppress the dust and vacuums or exhaust ventilation can capture it at the source

3. Wear a N95 NIOSH certified respirator or Type CE abrasive-blast supplied-air respirator to reduce exposure

4. Post warning signs and limit access to areas where workers could be exposed above the OSHA permissible exposure limit of 50 µg/m^3

5. Participate in all training, exposure monitoring, health screening, and surveillance programs

6. Do not eat, drink, or use tobacco products in dusty areas

7. Thoroughly wash hands and face outside dusty areas

8. Wear disposable or washable work clothes at the worksite

9. Use air monitoring systems supported by industrial hygienists to help protect workers and reduce risk

10. Be familiar with OSHA 29 CFR 1926.1153 regulations (construction)

BONUS TIP: Shave facial hair when wearing a respirator. Even a tight-fitting respirator will not create a good seal if you have a beard or mustache.

2.3M
WORKERS EXPOSED TO CRYSTALLINE SILICA

100
TIMES SMALLER THAN ORDINARY SAND

90%
CONSTRUCTION WORKERS EXPOSED TO SILICA

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