

SILICA DUST EXPOSURE

Effective dust control methods must be implemented to prevent silica dust from being released into the air. To limit exposure to harmful silica dust, these control methods can provide a safer work environment:

- Apply water to a saw blade when cutting materials or use tools equipped with an integrated water delivery system.
- Use tools equipped with shrouds and dust collection systems.
- Install local ventilation or use vacuums to collect dust.
- Avoid working in dusty work environments whenever possible and wear a respirator when needed or required.
- A dust mask is not enough! Respiratory protection is only permitted when other dust control measures are not sufficient.
- Wet dust before sweeping it up or vacuum dust instead of sweeping it.
- Do not eat or drink near dusty work areas.
- Park cars and trucks away from the work area so they will not be covered with silica dust.
- Shower (if possible) and change into clean clothes before leaving to prevent carrying silica dust away from the work site.



OSHA Standard 1926.1153(d)(1) *The employer shall ensure that no employee is exposed to an airborne concentration of respirable crystalline silica in excess of 50 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, calculated as an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA).*

Discussion

Image: 0001227 osha.gov/silica-crystalline

What are the potential health risks associated with exposure to silica dust?

What safety precautions do you take to reduce exposure to silica dust?