



Weekly Safety Meetings Select Edition

Safety Training for the Construction Industry

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All Sealants, Inc.

Week of 3/29/2021

3/31/21

The Dangers of Silica Dust

Silicosis is a disabling, irreversible, and sometimes fatal lung disease caused by overexposure to breathable crystalline silica, also called silica dust. Each year, more than 250 workers in the U.S. die from silicosis. Because of the ambiguity of the symptoms—the most common are coughing and shortness of breath—silicosis is frequently misdiagnosed as bronchitis, emphysema, or tuberculosis. While there is no cure for silicosis, it is completely preventable by reducing your exposure to silica dust.

Construction workers have a higher risk of exposure to silica dust because of the presence of concrete, masonry, and stone at their jobsites. Workers in high-risk jobs include those in abrasive blasting, foundry work, stone cutting, rock drilling, quarry work, and tunneling. Exposure may occur during jack hammering, concrete mixing, brick and concrete block cutting and sawing, and demolition of concrete or masonry structures. Crystalline silica particles are potentially dangerous only when the particles are in the air. If materials on the jobsite contain silica but their use does not generate dust, there is little chance that you will inhale silica dust.

To prevent silicosis, you must take adequate protective measures:

- Know the health hazards and symptoms related to exposure to silica dust.

- Participate in air monitoring and training programs provided by your employer.
- Be aware of the operations and job tasks that create silica dust and know how to control it at the source.
- Use all available work practices, such as water sprays and ventilation, to reduce your exposure to dust.
- When available, replace crystalline silica materials with safer substitutes.
- If possible, wear disposable or washable work clothes at the jobsite.
- Shower before you leave work to prevent contamination of your home or vehicle.
- Don't eat, drink, smoke, or apply cosmetics in areas where silica dust is present.
- If respiratory protection is required, wear only an NIOSH-certified N95 respirator.
- Do not alter the respirator in any way.

Use safety measures and personal protective equipment to prevent silica dust from damaging your lungs and your life.

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SAFETY REMINDER
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Prevention is the only solution.

NOTES:

SPECIAL TOPICS /EMPLOYEE SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS/NOTES:

S.A.F.E. CARDS® PLANNED FOR THIS WEEK:

REVIEWED SDS #

SUBJECT:

MEETING DOCUMENTATION:

JOB NAME:

MEETING DATE:

SUPERVISOR:

ATTENDEES:

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These instructions do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations.