

Silica

Additional Resources:

- [Complete OSHA Standard 1926.1153](#)

Silicosis is a disease of the lungs due to breathing of dust containing crystalline silica particles. This dust can cause fibrosis or scar tissue formations in the lungs that reduce the lung's ability to work to extract oxygen from the air. There is no cure for this disease, thus, prevention is the only answer.

The most severe exposures to crystalline silica result from sandblasting to remove paint and rust from stone buildings, metal bridges, tanks, and other surfaces. Other activities that may produce crystalline silica dust include jack hammering, rock/well drilling, concrete mixing, concrete drilling, brick and concrete block cutting and sawing. Employers are required to provide and assure the use of appropriate controls for crystalline silica-containing dust. Be sure to use all available engineering controls such as water sprays and ventilation or containment structures.

Appropriate engineering controls, personal protective equipment, respirators, and work practices shall be used to protect employees from crystalline silica. Go to OSHA's website: www.osha.gov/dsg/topics/silicacrystalline/construction.html for complete information.