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Committee	Occupational Health
Topic	Other

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Learning Objectives:

1. identify the primary source of silicosis data;
2. list the primary industries and occupations in the SENSOR silicosis data;
3. identify at least one state-based prevention activity

Conclusions:

Silicosis is a preventable lung disease caused by the inhalation and deposition of respirable crystalline silica in the lungs; it is nearly always attributable to occupational exposure. Three states (New Jersey, Michigan, and Ohio) conducted case-based surveillance for silicosis for 15 years with partial funding from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) under the Sentinel Event Notification System for Occupational Risks (SENSOR) program. Each state used a standard case definition and a questionnaire to collect a common set of variables. Data were submitted to NIOSH for aggregation. Presented are selected provisional summary data from the three state programs based on 1,398 confirmed cases of silicosis reported for 1989–2002. Hospital discharge records represented the primary source of case identification (75%), followed by health care professional reports (13%). Duration of employment in jobs with potential silica exposure was ascertained, 7% had less than 10 years of exposure. Overall, primary metal industries (57%), stone, clay, glass, and concrete products (16%), and special trade construction contractors (5%) were the industries accounting for the highest proportion of cases. Predominant occupations included laborers, except construction (18%), and molding and casting machine operators (8%). State data has been used to target at-risk industries and occupations for prevention efforts. Examples of state intervention and prevention activities will also be presented. Disclaimer: The findings and conclusions in this abstract have not been formally distributed by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health and should not be construed to represent any agency determination or policy.
