

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH BRANCH

Occupational Health Watch: February 2019

Preventing Illness from Silica Dust

Workers in construction and manufacturing jobs are often exposed to respirable crystalline silica, which is released when cutting or drilling into stone and concrete. Breathing silica dust is dangerous and can lead to serious and often fatal illnesses.

There are steps employers must take to protect workers by reducing exposure to dust. These steps include using controls like wet methods and ventilation. Respirators can be used, but only if other methods are not protective enough.

The following resources provide guidance for how employers can protect workers from hazardous exposures to silica dust.



Photo: Wet methods and ventilation can reduce dust exposures.

Image courtesy National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

Resources

Silica Safety Resources for Stone Fabricators – CDPH web page

Respirable Crystalline Silica Standards – Cal/OSHA web page

Work Safely with Silica – CPWR website

Silica topic page – NIOSH

Email Occupational Health Watch (OHW@cdph.ca.gov) with feedback or change of address.

Page Last Updated : February 25, 2019

