



OSHA silica standard implementation

Workers exposed to crystalline silica are at an increased risk of developing serious health effects including silicosis, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and kidney disease.

To comply with the OSHA standard (1926.1153), employers must determine if work performed is covered. Employers that cut, drill, crush, grind, or physically alter concrete, brick, block, stone, mortar, and other materials containing crystalline silica will fall under this standard. The OSHA compliance requirements are as follows:

These employers must:

- Use specified exposure control methods, which can be found in table 1. (or)
 - Note: Using these methods, the employer does not have to assess employees' silica exposure levels.
- Use alternative exposure control methods
 - Must determine levels of respirable crystalline silica to which employees are exposed.
 - Limit exposure to a permissible exposure limit (PEL) of 50 micrograms per cubic meter of air as an 8-hour time-weighted average.
 - Use engineering controls where feasible, to limit exposures to PEL and supplement controls with respiratory protection where necessary.
 - Keep records of employee exposure to respirable crystalline silica.

All employers covered by the standard must:

- Provide respiratory protection when required.
- Restrict housekeeping practices that expose employees to respirable crystalline silica where feasible alternatives are available.
- Establish and implement a written exposure control plan.
- Designate a competent person.
- Offer medical exams to employees required to wear a respirator under the standard for 30 or more days a year.
- Provide hazard awareness training to employees.
- Keep records of medical examinations.

For more information, visit the OSHA website links listed below.

Table 1 can be found at:

1926.1153(c)(1)

https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=1270

Text for this document comes primarily from:

OSHA Small Entity Compliance Guide for the Respirable Crystalline Silica Standard for Construction.

<https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3902.pdf>

The information contained in this service bulletin was obtained from reliable sources. However, United Fire Group accepts no legal responsibility for the correctness or completeness of this information.

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