Chapter 56: Respirable Crystalline Silica

Quick Start Summary

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URL: https://www-group.slac.stanford.edu/esh/eshmanual/references/silicaQuickstart.pdf

1 Who needs to know about these requirements

The requirements of Respirable Crystalline Silica apply to workers potentially exposed to airborne concentrations of respirable crystalline silica, their supervisors, competent persons, subcontractors, and the respirable crystalline silica program manager; and Waste Management and the Occupational Health Center.

2 Why

Respirable crystalline silica (quartz, cristobalite, and/or tridymite contained in airborne particles) poses a serious health hazard, being associated with cancer and damage to the lungs, kidneys, and immune system.

3 What do I need to know

Cutting, drilling, grinding, coring, and other abrasive operations on concrete are potential sources of airborne silica, as are operations on sheetrock, surfaces painted with low volatile organic compounds, tile, brick, some insulation products, and silica-containing mortar, paints, or insulation.

To limit worker exposure, standard controls, such as the use of water at the working surface, mechanical ventilation, and approved vacuums to control dust, are generally adequate. In some cases respirators may be required. When these controls may not be adequate, an exposure assessment must be conducted. Medical surveillance is required for any worker required to wear a respirator 30 or more days a year for silica-related work. When performing airborne-silica generating tasks, the control methods to be used must be documented, workers who perform silica-related tasks must be trained, and the disposal of waste must be coordinated with Waste Management.

4 When

These requirements take effect 26 July 2020.

5 Where do I find more information

SLAC Environment, Safety, and Health Manual (SLAC-I-720-0A29Z-001)
- Chapter 56, “Respirable Crystalline Silica”

Or contact the program manager.