

TOOLBOX TALKS

Preventing Silicosis When Working Around Rock Dust

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TOPIC: Preventing Silicosis When Working Around Rock Dust

Silicosis is a disabling, progressive, and often fatal lung disease.

What is Silica?

- Crystalline silica is a basic component of soil, sand, granite, and most types of rocks
- Silica is also used as an abrasive blasting agent
- Caused by exposure to respirable crystalline silica dust
- Silica injuries can surface up to 15 years after exposure

Preventing Silicosis

- Use exhaust ventilation and blasting cabinets
- Use water hoses to remove dust
- Use vacuums with high-efficiency particulate filters
- NEVER use compressed air to clean dust
- Instead of dry sweeping, remove dust by wet sweeping or by using a compound
- Substitute with non-crystalline silica blasting materials
- When sawing concrete or masonry use saws that provide water to the blade
- When rock drilling use water through the drill stem to reduce the amount of dust
- Use respirators and other PPE approved for protection against silica
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke around silica dust
- Always wash your hands and face after you leave the exposure area
- Provide training about the health effects and precautionary practices that reduce exposure to silica

Discussion Date: _____

Employee Participants:

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