

What You Need to Know About Silica

Workers who inhale very small crystalline silica particles are at increased risk of developing serious—and often deadly—silica-related diseases. These tiny particles (known as “respirable” particles) can penetrate deep into workers’ lungs and cause silicosis, an incurable and sometimes fatal lung disease. Crystalline silica exposure also puts workers at risk for developing lung cancer, other potentially debilitating respiratory diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and kidney disease.

Exposure Assessment

Your employer must assess the exposure of each employee who is (or may reasonably be expected to be) exposed to silica at or above the action level.

Regulated Areas

Your employer will also establish a regulated area wherever an employee’s exposure to airborne concentrations of silica is, or can reasonably be expected to be, in excess of the PEL. A common way to do so would be to post signs near all entrances to regulated areas. The sign will look like this:



Do not enter this area unless you are authorized to perform work duties or are observing air monitoring procedures. You are also required to wear a respirator when in the designated area.