

Control Silica Dust Before You Cut

COMPANY

PROJECT

DATE

PRESENTED BY

Cutting, grinding, and drilling concrete or masonry can release fine silica dust that reaches deep into your lungs. Breathing this dust can cause serious diseases, including silicosis and lung cancer. General construction crews need to control dust at the tool and protect people working nearby.

Plan Before Starting

- Tell the foreman what material you will work on and which tool you will use. Include whether the work is outdoors, indoors, or in an enclosed space.
- Ask which dust-control method applies. OSHA's Table 1 lists controls for specific tasks. If the employer uses that approach, all listed controls and required respiratory protection must be fully implemented.
- If the employer does not use the Table 1 approach, exposure must be assessed and limited. Do not assume a setup is safe just because another crew used it.
- Check that exposure information matches the material, task, controls, and conditions. Information from an open outdoor area may not represent work in an enclosed room.

Keep Controls Working

- Before starting, check the dust-control equipment assigned to the tool. Look for disconnected hoses, damaged parts, or a water supply that is not ready.
- When using wet methods, apply enough water to minimize visible dust. A little water on the surface is not enough if dust keeps rising during the cut.
- For Table 1 work indoors or in enclosed areas, provide exhaust as needed to minimize visible airborne dust buildup. Coordinate with the foreman before dust spreads into nearby work areas.
- If water stops, dust collection fails, or dust builds up, stop the task and report it. Restore the control before continuing; do not finish the cut with the control disabled.

Protection Follows the Task

- Dust controls come first. When feasible controls cannot reduce exposure enough, the employer must still use them and add respiratory protection that meets the applicable requirements.
- Ask whether your task requires a respirator. Do not substitute a face covering or choose respiratory protection on your own.
- Tell the foreman when you switch between cutting, grinding, and drilling. Under Table 1, combined task time can change which respiratory protection is required.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

You are cutting concrete inside a room. The water supply slows, and visible dust starts drifting toward a worker drilling nearby. Someone suggests finishing the cut first. What would you stop, report, and check before restarting?

Questions for the crew

1. What dust controls apply to the tool and task you are using?
2. What signs tell you to stop and report a control problem?
3. Who will confirm the required respiratory protection when tasks or conditions change?

| Control silica dust at the task, keep the controls working, and stop when protection fails.

Sources: 29 CFR 1926.1153, Respirable crystalline silica; 29 CFR 1926.55, Gases, vapors, fumes, dusts, and mists; 29 CFR 1926.103, Respiratory protection
Drafted with AI for review by a competent person. Clever Rook writes from the official regulation text it cites, but it doesn't know your site. Check it against your conditions and your company's safety program before use. Not legal advice.

Control Silica Dust Before You Cut

COMPANY

PROJECT

DATE

REVIEWED BY (COMPETENT PERSON)

REVIEW DATE

#	NAME (PRINT)	SIGNATURE	COMPANY
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			