

Leadership and worker involvement toolkit

Preventing exposure to silica

One of the top five health risks arising from construction work

Checklist from Seven steps > Step 3 > Key tool > Health risks



Manager

- 1) Educate your workers about RCS (respirable crystalline silica) dust and the lung disease risks linked to it.
- 2) Consult your workers on the importance of control measures and the need to properly use them.
- 3) Plan the job and provide the right equipment.
- 4) Train workers on how to use the equipment and any common problems they may find.

Worker

- 1) Be aware of the dangers of working with RCS dust.
- 2) Check the equipment you've been provided with is right for the job, in good working order and that you know how to use it.
- 3) Follow the method of work you've been given.
- 4) If in doubt, stop work and ask your supervisor/manager for more information.

Links to HSE guidance

Time to clear the air! Protect your lungs when using cut-off saws: www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/misc830.pdf

Accompanying video to *Time to clear the air!*: www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cleartheair/index.htm

Respiratory disease in construction: www.hse.gov.uk/construction/healthrisks/respiratory.htm

Planning – Prioritising decisions and managing risk

- 1) Can you eliminate the RCS dust risk? (Do the cuts need to be made or can an alternative non-silica containing material be used?) Where this is not possible, can the risk be reduced through the use of non-powered tools such as block splitters?
- 2) When using a power tool, such as a cut-off saw, ensure that:
 - water suppression or on-tool extraction is used to control the dust at the cutting blade;
 - there is an appropriate supply of water or electricity;
 - workers are provided with an FFP3 face mask to protect against any of the dust that is not controlled. Tight-fitting masks will also need to be face-fit tested;
 - the equipment is properly maintained, with spares provided where they might be regularly needed; and
 - where possible, the cutting work is undertaken away from other people.
- 3) Anyone using the control measures will need to be properly trained and supervised to ensure they are working correctly.

To download this checklist, complete the *Exposure to Silica* case study, see:
Seven steps > Step 3 > Key tool > Health risks



Record your site briefing here

Who has been briefed:

I confirm that I have briefed these people on the key points of the LWIT Step 3 Key tool on preventing exposure to silica.

Signed off by

Concerns raised at the briefing

Changes implemented or actions planned

The *Leadership and worker involvement toolkit* is aimed particularly at small and medium sized businesses and is designed to help improve your health and safety and bring additional benefits to your business performance and productivity. See: www.hse.gov.uk/construction/lwit/

Developed by the construction industry's Leadership and Worker Engagement Forum. Hosted by HSE 08/11