

CUT THE DUST

Controlling silica dust exposure cuts the risk of getting lung cancer, silicosis and emphysema



CUT THE RISK

15 people a week in Britain die from lung cancer caused by silica dust exposure at work*



What is silica dust?

Silica is all around us – it's in stone, bricks, concrete and many other common materials – even some plastic composites. Undisturbed silica is safe. But if you work on materials that contain silica, you'll be making dangerous silica dust.

Silica dust is created when the 'crystalline silica' in things like stone, mortar or tiles is broken down and released. It happens when you drill, saw, cut, grind or sand the products – or work on them in any way that disturbs the natural silica content. Even dealing with ballast on a railtrack or sweeping up after a task has been finished can leave unhealthy dust in the air.

How is silica dust dangerous?

Silica dust can be harmful if you breathe it in. Don't be fooled by the word 'dust'. Unlike household dust, silica dust won't just make you sneeze and cough. It can be deadly. Silica dust particles are very small and can get deep into your lungs and stay there, inflaming them and causing serious health problems in some people, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, silicosis and cancer.

EXPOSED TO SILICA
DUST AT WORK...
500,000 UK
5 MILLION EU
2.2 MILLION USA
10 MILLION INDIA
23 MILLION CHINA

In association with



WORKING TOGETHER TO BEAT OCCUPATIONAL CANCER

Find out more about silica dust, learn how to control it and get free resources at www.notimetolose.org.uk/networkrail

Institution of Occupational Safety and Health www.iosh.co.uk

*The burden of occupational cancer in Great Britain', Dr Lesley Rushton, HSE, 2012, www.hse.gov.uk/research/rrpdf/rr931.pdf