

Silica dust in a nutshell

What is silica?

Silica is a common mineral found in soil, sand, rock, granite, and clay. For example, sandstone is more than 70 % silica, and granite contains around 15 % to 30 %.

Silica is also present in construction materials such as bricks, tiles, concrete and mortar, which explains why many construction, manufacturing, and logistics companies battle with silica dust.

Why is silica dangerous?

Fine silica dust is hard to spot and seldom has an impact on the functioning of equipment. For that reason, many business owners find it easy to ignore and overlook it. However, its small size is also what makes it so dangerous, as it can make its way deep into the lungs and can cause serious health risks with prolonged exposure.

What is silica dust?

Silica dust is generated from materials containing silica during many common construction tasks. Some of the dust created, known as respirable crystalline silica (RCS), is too fine to see with normal lighting.

Activities that generate silica dust

- Cutting
- Drilling
- Grinding
- Polishing
- Brick-laying
- Tunneling
- Stone working
- Sweeping

...among many others.

Keep dust down!

- When you clean up your workplace, never use a broom! Use a vacuum and wear your PPE.
- Even a quick task can create dangerous levels of silica dust – control every exposure.
- Silica dust particles are so small that they float in the air for longer – sometimes for several hours – and they can make their way deep into your lungs.
- Controlling silica dust with industrial air purification cuts the risk of silicosis, lung cancer, and other related diseases.

Where does silica dust come from?



Quartz



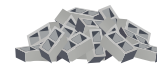
Soil



Sand



Granite



Cement



Brick