



SILICA

is one of the most commonly found minerals on the planet. It can be present in dirt, gravel, rock, sand, or soil. Crystalline silica dust is the form most commonly used in the workplace. The dust particles are invisible to the naked eye and can only be seen by microscope. Absorption of silica dust can occur through inhalation when the dust is disturbed. Silicosis is a potentially fatal disease resulting from exposure to high levels of crystalline silica dust. It can manifest as chronic, accelerated, or acute silicosis depending on exposure levels. Over exposure to silica can increase the risk of lung cancer, COPD, and kidney disease.

OSHA sets standards for the permissible exposure limits (PEL) of crystalline silica dust in the workplace. UO employees completing certain construction and maintenance tasks or in glass or ceramic arts studios may have contact with silica dust. The University conducts exposure monitoring to track PEL and institutes engineering controls or PPE when PEL is at or above an occupational actionable level.

WHAT TO DO!

- Always use task specific required PPE!
- Pay attention to posted warning signs in areas and warning labels on materials.
- If exposure levels require a respirator, complete the required training and fit test in the Respiratory Protection Program. More information at: safety.uoregon.edu/respiratory-protection-program
- Bring questions and concerns to your supervisor!
- Direct additional questions or concerns to EHS.



Pay attention to warning sign and labels!



If respirators are required, complete training and a fit test!



Utilize all engineering controls and PPE!

