

GOOD PRACTICES FOR GOOD HYGIENE

This activity covers good hygiene practices that should be followed in the workplace, for workers handling or having contact with substances that contain crystalline silica.

ACCESS

Restrict access to the work area to authorised personnel only.

DESIGN AND EQUIPMENT

- Provide separate storage accommodation for workers' clean clothes, work clothes and personal protective equipment.
- Ensure the area is spacious, organised and well-ventilated.
- This area should have toilets, showers and wash basins as well as personal lockers.
- Consider providing separate "clean" and "dirty" lockers in situations where work clothes become very dirty.
- Consider providing a separate, well-ventilated, warm area where damp clothing can be hung up to dry.
- Note that the drying of damp, dirty clothes can lead to airborne dust generation. When overalls are dirty, exchange them for clean ones.
- Define a specific clean area where workers can prepare meals, eat and drink away from their workstation.
- Provide your workers with refrigerators for storing food and drink.
- Provide your workers with an adequate supply of clean working clothes, including spare sets. For those handling silica flour, overalls should be made of a finely woven fabric to prevent dust being absorbed. Workers should not take their dirty work clothes home; these should be cleaned by the employer as required.
- Workers should remove dirty overalls before entering canteen facilities or other places (e.g. offices).
- **DO NOT use compressed air to clean overalls.**
- Air shower cabins can be used to clean overalls.
- **Workers should not smoke at their workplace.**



MAINTENANCE

- Ensure equipment used in the task is maintained as advised by the supplier/installer in efficient working order and in good repair.
- Follow any special procedures that are needed to ensure good cleaning of the working equipment.
- Put in place measures to control the risk of bacterial growth within water sources used across site, focusing most on systems where water droplets will be generated.

EXAMINATION AND TESTING

- Visually check the cloakroom and the area designed for eating and drinking at least once per week for signs of damage. If used infrequently, then check it before each use.
- Visually check working clothes daily for signs of damage and dust.
- Keep records of inspections for a suitable period of time which complies with national laws (minimum five years).
- Put in place measures to control the risk of bacterial growth within water sources used across site, focusing most on systems where water droplets will be generated.

GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYERS ON CONTROLLING EXPOSURE TO RCS IN THE WORKPLACE

CLEANING AND HOUSEKEEPING

- **DO NOT clean up with a dry brush or using compressed air.**
- Use vacuum or wet cleaning methods
- Keep eating/food preparation areas hygienically clean.
- Food and drink should not be stored or consumed at the workstation.
- Wash your hands before eating and drinking.
- Workers should shower daily at the end of their shift.

TRAINING

- Give your employees information on the health effects associated with respirable crystalline silica dust.
- Provide employees with training on: dust exposure prevention; checking controls are working and using them; when and how to use any respiratory protective equipment provided and what to do if something goes wrong. Refer to task guidance sheet **2.3.4** and part 1 of the Good Practice Guide.

SUPERVISION

- Have a system to check that control measures are in place and that they are being followed. Refer to task guidance sheet **2.3.3**.
- Employers should make sure that employees have all the means to perform the checklist given below.



PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- Refer to task guidance sheet **2.1.15** dedicated to Personal Protective Equipment.
- Risk assessment must be carried out to determine whether existing controls are adequate. If necessary, respiratory protective equipment (with the appropriate protection factor) should be provided and worn.
- Provide storage facilities to keep personal protective equipment clean when not in use.
- Replace respiratory protective equipment at intervals recommended by its suppliers.

EMPLOYEE CHECKLIST

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Look for signs of damage, wear or poor operation of any equipment used. If you find any problems, tell your supervisor. Do not carry on working if you think there is a problem. | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep dirty work clothes separate from clean clothes. | <input type="checkbox"/> Remove dirty work clothes (overalls) before entering canteen facilities or other clean areas. | <input type="checkbox"/> Use, maintain and store any respiratory protective equipment provided in accordance with instructions. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean up using vacuum or wet cleaning methods. | <input type="checkbox"/> Use only the "dirty" locker for dirty work clothes. | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't store food or drink at your workstation. Use the refrigerated storage facilities provided by your employer. | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't smoke in the workplace. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Don't take your dirty work clothes (overalls) home. | <input type="checkbox"/> Store clean work clothes and your private clothes only in the "clean" locker. | <input type="checkbox"/> Wash your hands thoroughly before eating. | <input type="checkbox"/> Check and implement measures to control the risk of bacterial growth within water sources used across site, focusing most on systems where water droplets will be generated. |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Get your work clothes (overalls) washed by your employer. | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep food preparation and eating areas hygienically clean. | | |

This guidance sheet is aimed at employers to help them comply with the requirements of workplace health and safety legislation, by controlling exposure to respirable crystalline silica. Specifically, this sheet provides advice on good hygiene for workers who use products that contain crystalline silica.

Following the key points of this task guidance sheet will help reduce exposure.

Depending on the specific circumstances of each case, it may not be necessary to apply all of the control measures identified in this sheet in order to minimise exposure

to respirable crystalline silica. i.e. to apply appropriate protection and prevention measures. This document should also be made available to persons who may be exposed to respirable crystalline silica in the workplace, in order that they may make the best use of the control measures which are implemented.

This sheet forms part of the Good Practices Guide on silica dust prevention, which is aimed specifically at the control of personal exposure to respirable crystalline silica dust in the workplace.