

## **Facts to Know About the Silica Standard**

The new Silica Standard will go into effect on June 23, 2018 for General Industry. The new standard will reduce the permissible silica exposure level an employee can be exposed to over an 8-hour time weighted average from 100 micrograms per cubic meter to 50 micrograms per cubic meter. The new standard also established an action level of 25 micrograms per cubic meter. OSHA believes the new standard is needed to reduce the number of employees that develop silicosis. OSHA has outlined their requirements in the new standard 1910.1053. The fall standard can be reviewed in detail on the OSHA website at [www.OSHA.gov](http://www.OSHA.gov).

The following is a condensed version of these requirements:

- Employers shall ensure that no employee is exposed to airborne concentrations of respirable crystalline silica in excess of 50 micrograms per cubic meter ug/m<sup>3</sup> for an 8-hour work shift.
- The employer shall assess the exposure level of each employee who is, or may reasonably be expected to be, exposed.
- Employees must be notified of the results of the industrial hygiene monitoring within 15 days of the employer receiving the results.
- Whenever an exposure assessment indicates that employee exposure is above the 50 micrograms per cubic meter, the employer shall describe in a written notification, the corrective action that is being taken to reduce employee exposure to at or below 50 micrograms per cubic meter level (PEL).
- Areas where employee exposure is or can be above the PEL, the employer shall establish a regulated area.

## **Communication**

The employer is to include silica in their Hazard Communication Program and ensure employees have access to labels on products that contain silica and their Safety Data Sheets. All employees exposed to or likely to be exposed to silica, are to be trained in accordance with the provisions of the Hazard Communication Standard.

***Signs shall be posted at the entrance to regulated areas that read:***

- “Danger: Respirable Crystalline Silica May Cause Damage to the Lungs”
- “Authorized Personnel Only: Wear Respiratory Protection in the Area”

## **Employee Information & Training**

The employer shall ensure that each employee covered by this standard can demonstrate knowledge in the following:

- The Health Hazards of Silica
- Specific tasks that could result in exposure

- Specific measures the employer is taking to reduce exposure to silica
- The content of this standard
- Purpose and description of the medical surveillance program
- A copy of the standard is to be readily available to all employees without cost.

### **Recordkeeping**

Everything the employer does to comply with this standard must be documented and records maintained. If you haven't started the review of air monitoring of projected tasks, you should begin that process so your company will be in full compliance on June 23, 2018. If you need any help with this process or any employee safety and health related training, please call Gary Hanson at 330-495-3437.