



# SAFETY TAILGATE MEETING

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Date	October 29, 2024	Time	9:16 PM	Conductor	Gregg Berwin

## CONCRETE AND SILICA AWARENESS

### INTRODUCTION

If you work with concrete, you have the potential to be exposed to a particular hazard that some 2.3 million workers are exposed to. It is silica. In particular, there is a kind of silica that is extremely harmful. It is called crystalline silica.

In this meeting, we will discuss

- (1) What silica is and where it is found**
- (2) The hazards of silica and how to protect yourself**
- (3) OSHA's silica standard**

### WHAT SILICA IS AND WHERE IT IS FOUND

Silica is a mineral that is found in many naturally occurring materials and in countless industrial products, and at construction sites. Crystalline silica is a particularly harmful type of silica. While there are different forms of crystalline silica, quartz is the most common. It can be found in materials such as sand, rock, gravel, slate, granite and clay. It can also be found in many building products, and one of them is concrete.

### THE HAZARDS OF SILICA AND HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

**Specifically related to concrete:** When concrete is cut, ground, drilled, sanded, cleaned up, jackhammered, or otherwise disturbed and concrete dust gets airborne and respirable, you are exposed to silica. Just how harmful is it? You might think it is no big deal. However, overexposure to silica can lead to chronic bronchitis, silicosis, lung cancer, kidney disease, and even death.

**Let's discuss just one of these illnesses - silicosis.**

Acute silicosis can occur within weeks of exposure. There is also accelerated silicosis and chronic silicosis, both of which could take years to manifest itself. There is no need for this! You can protect yourself!

**Protecting yourself:**

Protecting yourself comes down to two main tools: 1) Engineering Controls, and 2) Respiratory Protection.

**Engineering Controls:** Engineering controls are always better than respiratory protection and should be what is primarily used. Engineering controls will usually include the use of water or an approved vacuum and HEPA filter system.

**Respiratory Protection:** Respiratory protection may also need to be worn. It depends on the task you are performing, where you are performing it, and how long you will be performing it.

How do you know if an engineering control or respiratory protection is needed? OSHA gives direction on this.

## OSHA'S SILICA STANDARD

OSHA has a silica standard that every company must follow. Included in the standard is that companies who work with concrete must have a silica exposure control program and a plan for each project. Included in this plan will be:

- Work that may expose you to silica
- The engineering control needed
- The respiratory protection needed

Most companies follow OSHA's table 1 standard. This details exactly what engineering control and respiratory protection is required when your concrete work has the potential to result in concrete dust becoming airborne and respirable. It is important to know the plan and follow it!

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**Attendees Names**

Gregg Berwin

**Attendees Signatures**

N/A

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**CONDUCTOR SIGNATURE**

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