

Policy Number: 105.134

Title: Respirable Silica

Effective Date: 7/21/20

**PURPOSE:** To ensure appropriate precautions are taken to prevent harmful exposure to respirable

silica.

APPLICABILITY: Department-wide

### **DEFINITIONS:**

<u>Competent person</u> – an individual who is capable of identifying existing and foreseeable respirable crystalline silica hazards in the workplace and who has authorization to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate or minimize them.

<u>Construction work</u> – construction, alteration, or repair, including painting and decorating.

Respirable silica – very small particles of crystalline silica, about 100 times smaller than a grain of sand found on a beach, that can be inhaled deep into the lungs. Silica is a common mineral compound (silicon dioxide) that is a constituent of most earth rocks and the main component of sand. Respirable silica is typically created in processes such as sanding, grinding, cutting, drilling, or crushing silica into smaller particles.

### **PROCEDURES:**

### A. Responsibilities

- 1. The safety director for the department of corrections (DOC) maintains a written respirable silica safety program in compliance with federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standard 1926.1153 (Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 1926.1153).
- 2. The physical plant director/designee or work supervisor:
  - a) Ensures employees who may be exposed to respirable silica complete training;
  - b) Ensures compliance with DOC Policy 105.115, "Respiratory Protection Program;"
  - c) Ensures engineering control methods, as specified in Table 1 of OSHA standard § 1926.1153 (link attached), whenever possible for construction work; Examples of engineering control methods include such examples as the use of integrated water or vacuum systems for equipment that generates respirable silica;
  - d) Designates the competent person(s) (see section A.4, below);
  - e) Implements alternative exposure control methods, including exposure assessment process, if precautions listed in Table 1 of OSHA standard § 1926.1153 are not fully utilized;
  - f) Implements medical surveillance in compliance with OSHA standard § 1926.1153 for each employee who will be required to use a respirator for 30 or more days a year for respirable silica; and

- g) Notifies safety administrator/designee whenever there is potential for exposure to respirable silica.
- 3. The safety administrator/designee:
  - a) Provides training in compliance with OSHA standard § 1926.1153;
  - b) Provides assistance with exposure assessment and medical surveillance processes when required by OSHA standard § 1926.1153;
  - c) Retains exposure assessment data, or objective data, and communicates the results to the physical plant director, work supervisor, and affected employees; and
  - d) Evaluates the potential for exposure to respirable silica in non-construction work activities and provides guidance in compliance with OSHA standard § 1910.1053.
- 4. The competent person must:
  - a) Complete training in compliance with OSHA standard § 1926.1153; and
  - b) Make frequent and regular inspections of job sites, materials, and equipment to implement the exposure control plan.
- 5. Employees must:
  - a) Complete required training and document it in the agency-approved electronic training management system;
  - b) Follow appropriate exposure-control methods;
  - c) Follow the requirements of DOC Policy 105.115, "Respiratory Protection Program;" and
  - d) Notify their supervisor(s) of potential exposure to respirable silica.

### B. Training

- 1. Employees who may be exposed to respirable silica are required to complete training in compliance with OSHA standard § 1926.1153.
- 2. Training must include the following elements listed on OSHA standard § 1926.1153 for construction work:
  - a) Health hazards associated with exposure to respirable silica;
  - b) Specific tasks that could result in exposure to respirable silica;
  - c) Specific measures implemented to protect employees from exposure to respirable silica;
  - d) Identity of the competent person(s) designated by the physical plant director/designee or supervisor;
  - e) Medical surveillance program, if applicable; and
  - f) How to obtain additional information and a copy of OSHA standard § 1926.1153.

3. Training must be documented in the agency-approved electronic training management system, where it is retained per the employee development retention schedule.

# **INTERNAL CONTROLS:**

- A. The facility safety administrator retains exposure assessment data, or objective data.
- B. Training is documented in the agency-approved electronic training management system.

ACA STANDARDS: None

**REFERENCES:** Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Construction Industry

standard 1926.1153, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) § 1926.1153

OSHA General Industry standard 1910.1053, CFR § 1910.1053

DOC Policy 105.115, "Respiratory Protection Program"

**REPLACES:** All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or

transmitted by electronic means regarding this topic.

**ATTACHMENTS:** OSHA 1926.1153 Table 1 (105.134A, on Safety iShare site)

## **APPROVALS:**

Deputy Commissioner, Community Services
Deputy Commissioner, Facility Services
Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support
Assistant Commissioner, Criminal Justice Policy, Research, and Performance