
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:

Competent person – 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.

Construction work – 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

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