WORKPLACE CHECKLIST:
Changes to the workplace exposure standard for silica dust

This checklist will assist you to manage changes to the workplace exposure standard (WES) for silica dust at your workplace.

Understanding the change

When did your state or territory implement the reduced WES for silica dust?

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☐ Does your state or territory have any requirements in addition to the WES when working with silica dust?

For example, NSW and Victoria have specific regulations related to working with engineered stone.

☐ Have you read guidance material, such as Safe Work Australia's Guide for working with silica and silica containing products, or your state or territory's code of practice (if applicable)?

☐ Have you spoken with your workers and health and safety representatives about any changes that you plan to make to your workplace to comply with the WES?

Assessing the risk of silica dust at your workplace

☐ Do you know about the health risks of silica dust for your workers?

☐ Have you provided your workers with training and information about the health risks of silica dust?

☐ Have you completed a risk assessment for silica dust?

☐ Do you need air monitoring to assess the risk of silica dust at your workplace?

☐ Are your current control measures sufficient for you to comply with the reduced WES for silica dust?

☐ Do you need to implement new measures to control the risk of silica dust and comply with the new WES?

☐ Have you considered any other risks that new control measures may introduce?

For example, slip, trip and fall hazards when working with water.

☐ Have you identified all workers that need health monitoring, including those who do not work directly with silica dust?

Managing silica dust at your workplace

☐ Are you using a combination of the hierarchy of control measures to manage the risks of silica dust?

☐ **Elimination** – completely removing the hazard from your workplace

  ☐ *Can you use a crystalline silica containing product that doesn't need to be modified?*

  ☐ *Can you use a method that generates less dust, for example a wet method?*

☐ **Substitution** – replacing a product or chemical with one less hazardous

  ☐ *Can you use a product that contains a lower percentage of crystalline silica?*

  ☐ *Can you use a liquid or paste form of a silica product?*

☐ **Isolation** – placing physical barriers or distance between a hazard and your workers

  ☐ *Can you install physical barriers between workers and machines or tools that generate silica dust?*

  ☐ *Can you isolate high dust generation work processes within an enclosed room?*

☐ **Engineering controls** – using physical methods to change the characteristics of the task

  ☐ *Can you use automation when cutting, grinding or drilling?*

  ☐ *Can you install on-tool dust extraction or use wet cutting methods?*

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☐ **Administrative controls** – providing additional protection after implementing substitution, isolation and engineering controls

    ☐ *Have you updated any internal policies and procedures to account for new measures to control the risk of silica dust and provided them to your workers?*

☐ **Personal protective equipment**

    ☐ *Have you provided training for your workers on using and maintaining personal protective equipment (PPE) and respiratory protective equipment (RPE)?*

    ☐ *Have you provided fit testing for your workers wearing RPE?*

Maintaining and reviewing control measures

☐ Are you maintaining all control measures for damage, wear and tear?

    ☐ *Does anything need replacing or repair?*

☐ Have any new control measures introduced other risks?

    ☐ *Have you completed a risk assessment for these new risks?*

☐ Do you have a list of triggers that may indicate when controls are not working to their designed specification or operation?

For example, you notice dust is settling in areas of your workplace.

☐ Does your risk management plan include reviewing your control measures?

☐ Are you maintaining your air monitoring and health monitoring records appropriately?

Learn more about the changes to the WES for silica dust on the Safe Work Australia website.

Notes and comments:

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