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## DID YOU KNOW?

Workers involved in manufacturing, finishing and installing natural and manufactured stone countertop products, both in fabrication shops and during in-home finishing/installation are at risk for significant crystalline silica exposure.

Workers who inhale very small crystalline silica particles are at risk for silicosis – an incurable, progressively disabling and sometimes fatal lung disease. The risk can be mitigated by implementing dust control strategies like the ones described below.

## Protecting Workers from Silica Exposure During Countertop Installation and Finishing

Protect workers involved in the installation of stone countertops in commercial and residential spaces by limiting dust exposure:

- Do as much work as possible under controlled shop conditions instead of on site, or perform work outdoors or in well-ventilated areas to reduce respirable crystalline silica dust exposure.
- Wet methods for dust control may not be practicable on or near finished cabinets, walls, and floors, so other suppression methods (e.g., LEV) should be used during these operations.
- Use grinding and drilling tools equipped with dust shrouds coupled with LEV and a HEPA filter. Controls can be either tool mounted (drills) or attached to a vacuum system.
- Use a HEPA-filtered vacuum to clean up dust as soon as practicable.
- When engineering and work practice controls do not limit silica exposures to OSHA's PEL, provide workers with respirators.

## OSHA Proposes Revisions to Eye and Face Standards

OSHA recently published a proposal to revise personal protective equipment requirements in the agency's general industry, shipyard employment, longshoring, marine terminals and construction standards.

The proposal, if enacted, would align OSHA's eye and face protection standard with the latest ANSI consensus standards on eye and face protection. OSHA also plans to update the construction eye and face protection standard to make it more consistent with general industry and maritime standards. This would be accomplished by changing the construction standard at 29 CFR 1926.102(a)(2) to remove the reference to ANSI Z87.1.-1968 and replacing it with references to the same ANSI standards that will be specified in the general industry standard.