

NIOSH ALERT

Preventing Silicosis and Deaths From Sandblasting

WARNING!

Abrasive blasting with sands containing crystalline (free) silica can lead to serious or fatal respiratory disease.

Take the following steps to protect yourself from exposure to crystalline silica:

- Be aware of the health effects of silica dust (see *CDC/NIOSH Alert: Request for Assistance in Preventing Silicosis and Deaths from Sandblasting*).
- Participate in any medical examinations, air monitoring, or training programs offered by your employer.
- Substitute less hazardous blasting materials for crystalline silica.
- If substitution is not possible, use engineering controls such as blast-cleaning machines, cabinets, and local exhaust ventilation to minimize exposures to silica dust.



Sandblaster working in the dusty atmosphere created by airborne particles of silica.

- Be aware that the highest silica concentrations may occur inside blasting rooms or other containment structures.
- Use type CE positive-pressure abrasive blasting respirators when sandblasting.
- Change into disposable or washable work clothes at the worksite.
- Do not eat, drink, or use tobacco products in the blasting area.
- Wash your hands and face before eating, drinking, or smoking outside the blasting area.
- Shower and change into clean clothing before leaving the worksite.

For additional information, see *NIOSH Alert: Request for Assistance in Preventing Silicosis and Deaths from Sandblasting* [DHHS (NIOSH) 92-102], or call 1-800-35-NIOSH. Single copies are available free from the following:

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