



What is silica dust?



Crystalline silica is a **naturally occurring mineral** found in most rocks, soil, sand and clay and is used to create products like bricks, pavers, concrete, artificial stone products and tiles.

When you work with these materials, harmful silica dust can be produced.

Silica dust can be produced:

- during manufacturing and construction
- when mining, quarrying or tunnelling
- when processing materials containing silica
- when using sand-based products, and
- when cleaning the workplace.



Very small silica dust particles are known as respirable crystalline silica. Silica dust can stay in the air for a long time and if you breathe it in, it can get deep into your lungs and cause damage.

Breathing in silica dust can lead to:

- silicosis
- progressive massive fibrosis
- chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- chronic bronchitis, or
- lung cancer.



Lung damage and symptoms of disease may not show up for years. Workers may not show any symptoms, even when first diagnosed. There is no cure for silicosis. However, all silica related diseases are preventable.

Be **silica** smart

 **CLEAN AIR. CLEAR LUNGS.**

Not all workplace hazards are visible.