

# CRYSTALLINE SILICA

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There are many construction materials containing silica, such as engineered stone which are used in kitchen benches and counter tops.

### Typical crystalline silica levels in different materials are:

- Sand and sandstone | 70-100%
- Manufactured/engineered stone | 93% or higher
- Granite | 20-45% (typically 30%)
- Concrete and mortar | 25-70%
- Calcium-silicate bricks | 50-55%
- Slate | 20-40%
- Bricks | up to 30%
- Fibre cement sheets | 10-30%
- Demolition dust | 3-4%
- Marble | 2-5%
- Limestone | 2-5%

### When working with products containing Crystalline Silica please use the following precautions:



#### Use ventilation

Use local exhaust ventilation systems to remove dust. Ensure ventilation is correctly placed and operates at effective flow rates.



#### Use dust capture

Use tools with dust capture to prevent particles escaping into the air, especially where workers are mobile and moving around.



#### Cut with water

Cut stone with water, also known as wet cutting. Wet dust can't escape into the air.



#### Use a vacuum

Use a class M or H vacuum cleaner to remove dust. Never use a broom or compressed air. For specifications on commercial vacuums, refer to:

- AS/NZS 60335.2.69:2017 Household and similar electrical appliances.



#### Wear a mask

Wear the right mask to prevent breathing in silica. For specifications on the safest masks refer to:

- AS/NZS 1716:2012 respiratory protective devices.
- AS/NZS 1715:2009 selection, use and maintenance of respiratory protective equipment.

For more information regarding Crystalline Silica, please refer to:

<https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/hazardous-chemical/priority-chemicals/crystalline-silica>

For more information regarding managing the risks of RCS, please refer to:

[https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/1042367/managing-the-risk-of-silica-from-engineered-stone-in-the-workplace-COP.pdf](https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1042367/managing-the-risk-of-silica-from-engineered-stone-in-the-workplace-COP.pdf)