

Heavy Equipment with Enclosed Cabs

Do Your Customers Need to Comply with OSHA's Silica or MSHA's Dust Standards?

What You Need to Know

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) require employers to limit their employees' exposure to dust containing silica when working in an enclosed cab.

Workers are at risk when silica dust gets in the air they breathe inside of the cab. Silica dust can cause permanent and disabling lung diseases, such as silicosis, lung cancer, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

Your customers who use heavy equipment and utility vehicles to engage in work that will generate silica dust, such as hoe-ramming, rock ripping, demolition, grading, and excavation, must keep their employees' exposures to silica dust to the low level(s) required by the standard(s) they are working under when performing this work.



Photo courtesy of the IUOE

Regulations:

- OSHA's silica standards for construction (1926.1153) and general industry (1910.1053) are in effect and being enforced. The construction that involve heavy equipment with enclosed cabs. OSHA limits workers' silica exposure to 50 micrograms per cubic meter ($50 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ - the permissible exposure limit or PEL.)¹
- MSHA limits mine workers' exposure to coal dust, which contains silica, including heavy equipment operators, to 1,500 micrograms per cubic meter ($1,500 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$).²

[1] OSHA Respirable Crystalline Silica website <https://www.osha.gov/dsg/topics/silicacrystalline/>; OSHA Factsheet on Heavy Equipment and Utility Vehicles Used During Demolition Activities

