

Description: Rule requires engineering controls to keep workers from breathing silica dust. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has issued a final rule to curb lung cancer, silicosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and kidney disease in America's workers by limiting their exposure to respirable crystalline silica. The rule is comprised of two standards, one for Construction and one for General Industry and Maritime.

Key Provisions:

- Reduces the permissible exposure limit (PEL) for respirable crystalline silica to 50 micrograms per cubic meter of air, averaged over an 8-hour shift.
- Requires employers to: use engineering controls (such as water or ventilation) to limit worker exposure to the PEL; provide respirators when engineering controls cannot adequately limit exposure; limit worker access to high exposure areas; develop a written exposure control plan, offer medical exams to highly exposed workers, and train workers on silica risks and how to limit exposures.
- Provides medical exams to monitor highly exposed workers and gives them information about their lung health.
- Provides flexibility to help employers — especially small businesses — protect workers from silica exposure.

Compliance Schedule: Both standards contained in the final rule take effect on June 23, 2016 after which industries have one to five years to comply with most requirements, based on the following schedule:

- **Construction:** June 23, 2017, one year after the effective date.
- **General Industry and Maritime:** June 23, 2018, two years after the effective date.
- **Hydraulic Fracturing:** June 23, 2018, two years after the effective date for all provisions except Engineering Controls, which have a compliance date of June 23, 2021.

Schedule Training: Contact Gina Seay, Training Field Services Coordinator, at The El Group, Inc. via

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