



# Stop & Talk: Dust

Health, Safety, Security, & Environment

**Dust** - The hazards of dusts like silica and wood are well recognised, and there is specific guidance for these dusts. However, there are many more substances that generate dusts which are hazardous to health. Exposure to all such dusts needs to be prevented or, where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled.

## Dust and You:

### Household dust

Breathing in common household dust is unlikely to cause serious health effects. Some people suffer from asthma triggered by an allergy to the house dust mites which are found in domestic dust.

### Silica dust

Silica is a natural mineral that makes up part of materials like sandstone and granite. It's also found in many common building products such as concrete and mortar. The silica is broken into very fine dust (known as 'respirable crystalline silica' or 'RCS') when people carry out tasks such as cutting, drilling or grinding.

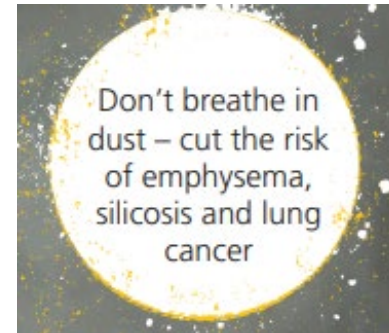
Breathing in silica dust can damage people's lungs, and can lead to serious diseases, including cancer, silicosis and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.



## What can you do?

There are simple things that everyone can do to make sure we are protecting our health and our future.

- Be aware of the risks associated with activities you do every day
- Recognise the dangers of hazardous dust and consider how it can affect your health
- Recognise how our design decisions can expose contractors or end users to dust
- Think of potentially dust-creating tasks from start to finish. Think how we can avoid creating dust, keep dust down and if required wear the right respiratory protective equipment and clothing



SWP 409- Respiratory protection program - SWP409\_(sharepoint.com)

If you have questions, please contact your supervisor, Office Safety and Environment Coordinator (OSEC), or local HSSE representative

HSSE Stop & Talk are written for educational purposes and are not intended to replace safe work practices or procedures.  
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