

## E Safety - Toolbox Talk

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### DUST FROM CUT-OFF SAWS, DISC CUTTERS, 'WHIZZERS'



When used to cut kerbs, paving, blocks or any other concrete based material you will produce enormous of dust (stone dust) The stone dust will contain some very fine dust called respirable crystalline silica or RCS for short. Exposure to RCS dust can cause serious health problems and may eventually kill.

Stones, rocks, sands and clays may contain large amounts of crystalline silica. These materials are all used in the production of kerbs, flags, bricks, tiles and concrete. Even plastic kerbs can contain a silica-based filler. Cutting these materials produces very fine RCS particles in the airborne dust. You can't always see the dust and may be causing harm to yourself or others around you

You are at risk if the dust you breathe in over a full shift contains more RCS than that shown next to the penny

What are the health effects: -

**Silicosis:** makes breathing more difficult and increases the risk of lung infections. It usually follows many years of exposure. But exceptional high exposures over a few months or years can cause these symptoms.



**Lung Cancer:** heavy and prolonged exposure to RCS can cause Lung cancer.

**Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD),** is a group of lung diseases like bronchitis and emphysema that may also be caused by RCS, resulting in severe breathlessness and prolonged coughing. The disease is slow to develop and rarely seen in people under 40. It can be very disabling and is a leading cause of death.

- ✓ ALWAYS – damp down the dust, using water suppression most saws are now supplied with fitting for water suppression
- ✓ USE a Mains fed hose pipe as your first choice alternatively
- ✓ USE a pressurised water bottle (you need a minimum flow rate of 0.5 litres per minute)
- ✓ WEAR a suitable dust mask – even when using water suppression
- ✓ ALWAYS wear eye protection - goggles
- ✓ ALWAYS use hearing protection
- ✓ ASK your supervisor about Hand Arm Vibration (HAVS) and allowed 'trigger times'
- ✓ BEWARE of others around you whilst cutting – possible flying debris
  
- ✗ DON'T use a nuisance grade dust mask, use one with an assigned protection of 10 or either FFP3
- ✗ DON'T Use worn blades and discs – replace to reduce cutting times (HAVS)
- ✗ ONLY Abrasive wheel trained operatives are allowed to replace discs and blades

*Finally always remember to check and maintain your equipment and report any defects to your supervisor*