

**RESPIRATORY RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH
EXPOSURE TO CRYSTALLINE SILICA**

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Abstract

Silica exposure and a related lung disease of occupational origin, silicosis, have been recognized for centuries. While silicosis remains an important occupational health problem, more recently attention has focused on the question -- Is there a relationship between silica exposure and lung cancer?

In 1997, the International Agency for Research on Cancer classified crystalline silica as a human carcinogen. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has identified silica for regulatory rulemaking. Since practically all soils contain crystalline silica, these events could impact the agriculture industry. The paper reviewed the principal respiratory health effects of silica exposure and addresses the potential impact of regulatory rulemaking.