Imperial College London

Estates Development and Projects

Dust Policy

CSM10 Dust Policy
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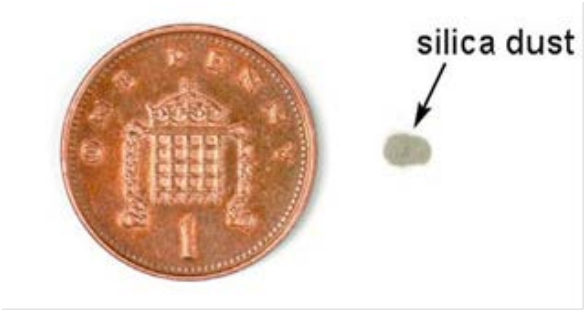
The following describes how the Estates Division discharges our duties under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH) Regulations 2002 (as amended) in regards to common construction tasks that can create dust.

This can present significant risks to the health of workers. Construction dust is not just a nuisance; it can seriously damage your health and some types can eventually even kill. Regularly breathing in these dusts over a long time can therefore cause life-changing lung diseases. These diseases include cancer, silicosis, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder (COPD). Every year in Great Britain over 500 construction workers are believed to die from lung cancer caused by silica dust alone. That is about 10 people a week. The amounts needed to cause this damage are not large. The largest amount of silica that is permissible that someone could be breathing in, in a day after using the right controls is shown below next to the penny.



At the start of the project the design needs to ensure dust hazards are addressed and eliminated using engineering controls. The hazards can be eliminated via the hierarchy of risk and using Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) in the whole work area. Where hazards are identified that are hard to eliminate and are left for the contractor to deal with on site, it must be remembered that PPE/RPE is the last resort.

In assessing the hazards inherent in construction work, there are three key elements involved in determining levels of exposure and the control measures needed to protect workers and the environment.

- Assess the risks
- Agree control measures, with input from those likely to be affected and
- Regularly review the agreed controls, to ensure they are still fit for purpose.

The following are examples of construction industry best practice. ICL Estates will want to see evidence of these controls being used on our construction sites:

Control Measures	Example image
Enclosures / Local Exhaust Ventilation (LEV) • Enclosing the work area to stop dust escaping by using sheeting or temporary screens. • Using LEV to remove dusty air from the work area, e.g. in enclosed spaces such as indoor locations.	
Water • Water damps down dust clouds. However, it needs to be used correctly. This means enough water supplied at the right levels for the whole time that the work is being done. Just wetting the material beforehand does not work. • During sweeping up works, a fine spray of water should be used.	
On-tool extraction • Removes dust as it is being produced. It is a type of local exhaust ventilation (LEV) system that fits directly onto the tool. This 'system' consists of several individual parts – the tool, capturing hood, extraction unit and tubing. Using an extraction unit to the correct specification (i.e. H (High) M (Medium) or L (Low) Class filter unit). Do not just use a general commercial vacuum.	

Respiratory protective equipment (RPE)
Water or on-tool extraction may not always be appropriate or they might not reduce exposure enough. Often RPE has to be provided as well. You will need to make sure that the RPE is:

- Adequate for the amount and type of dust – RPE has an assigned protection factor (APF) which shows how much protection is provided to the operative. The general level for construction dust is an APF of 20. This means the wearer only breathes one twentieth of the amount of dust in the air;
- Suitable for the work – disposable masks or half masks can become uncomfortable to wear for long periods. Powered RPE helps minimise this. Consider it when people are working for more than an hour without a break where permissible in line with manufacturers guidelines;
- Compatible with other items of protective equipment;
- Fits the user. Face fit testing is needed for tight- fitting masks;
- Worn correctly. Anyone using tight-fitting masks also needs to be clean shaven.

Remember: RPE is the last line of protection. If you are just relying on RPE you need to be able to justify your reasons for this.

Ride on / Manual Sweepers

- Collects excessive dust that has been created via vacuum system.
- Ideal for larger areas to reduce manual methods (broom, etc.).
- Low noise output.
- Battery operated and chargeable via 110v.

Brooms • Brooms should only be used as a last resort if no other equipment can be used to remove the dust. • If brooms are to be used then water suppression and masks must be worn (as highlighted above). • A product that can be of consideration if the need of a broom is still required is Dusmo. Dusmo is blended with active ingredients that help to allay potential airborne dust whilst collecting dirt and debris from the floor surface.	

Operatives will also need to be trained to ensure they undertake the task correctly by receiving relevant training and ensuring that the controls are used correctly. Supervisors shall ensure that operatives are:-

- Made aware of dust risks and how it may affect their health
- How to use the dust controls and check that they are working correctly
- How to maintain and clean equipment
- How to use and look after RPE/PPE that is issued and
- Encouraged to stop work if the agreed control measures are not delivering adequate protection.

During soft stripping works and particularly where floor coverings are to be removed, operatives and visitors must wear an appropriate face fitted mask whilst on site (even where LEV is used). The policy applies to all soft strip works.

Water suppression and the use of vacuum cleaners must be used at all times where practicable, with brooms and Dusmo employed as a last resort.

Health surveillance must be provided by employers for all their employees who are likely to be frequently exposed, or are at risk for any reason, e.g. they already suffer from breathing difficulties, or an existing medical condition that may be made worse by dust exposure.

Health records containing information on the outcomes of health surveillance and fitness for work should be kept and updated as necessary. Health records must be kept separate from any confidential medical results.

All contractors must have a suitable occupational health scheme in place, such as Constructing Better Health (CBH) and have a policy in place reflecting this. Occupational health schemes must be offered to all supply chain partners by the end of 2015. Registration with CBH for supply chain partners and the self-employed will satisfy the Client's requirements in this respect.

All policy objectives are agreed by our contractors through monthly meetings of the Safety, Health, Environmental Leadership Team (SHELT).

The monitoring of dust controls will take place during the Client's regular RAG Health & Safety inspections. Breaches of legislation and this policy that is witnessed on site will be discussed with the

Site Manager in the first instance, to ensure agreed improvements are being implemented in a timely manner. The final score for the RAG Health & Safety inspection report, in respect of breaches of this policy will be discussed and agreed with the Head of Health and Safety – Estates Projects, before the report is issued.