

Allura is committed to Health and Safety in the workplace. As part of that commitment, we want to provide resources to our customers to inform them of the updated Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Silica Standard (General Industry 29 CFR 1910.1053 and Construction Industry 1926.1153). Several common workplace operations which involve the cutting, sawing and drilling of silica containing products are covered in the regulation. Understanding the requirements are important as everyday materials used on most residential job sites, such as concrete, brick, block, rock and stone products, contain silica. OSHA provides guidance on silica Background and Health Impacts, Rule Requirements, Compliance Dates, State Plans and Compliance Assistance in the following link: https://www.osha.gov/dsg/topics/silicacrystalline/additional_info_silica.html.

Determining the silica exposure level is a key to knowing what type of workplace controls are needed. Exposure can be determined by using objective data from studies completed by experts who have evaluated task specific dust exposures. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) has published several reports related to controlling silica exposures <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/silica/default.html>. The reports provide guidance on specific tasks, such as concrete grinding, tuck-pointing and working with fiber cement.

The controls used to minimize airborne silica while using Allura products are the same as those used when working with other silica containing products. OSHA recommends minimizing airborne dust using engineering and work practice controls where feasible and following the safety guidelines listed in the product specification sheet. OSHA has identified specified control methods that should be used when working with materials containing crystalline silica. The information is included in Table 1 of the standard. The table identifies work practice control methods based on the task and tool being used. The link to Table 1 is: https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=STANDARDS&p_id=1270.

The agency recommends employers protect workers from silica using the same approach that is utilized for other workplace hazards: assess the hazard, develop/implement a plan, train your employees and use the proper tools. The Center for Construction Research and Training has tools available to guide employers through these steps <https://plan.silica-safe.org/>.