



## Virginia Abrasives Reference to OSHA Respirable Crystalline Silica Standards October, 2017

In March of 2016, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued a final ruling on respirable crystalline silica dust. This ruling provided for more stringent standards for an employee's exposure to silica dust. OSHA created two standards: one for construction and one for general industry and maritime. Read the full OSHA regulation by clicking here: <https://www.osha.gov/dsg/topics/silicacrystalline/>. OSHA began enforcing the new standards in September of 2017.

Virginia Abrasives Corporation (VAC) sells a variety of construction equipment and related accessory products to the construction industry. These products can be used when cutting, grinding, sawing, drilling sanding or polishing concrete, which can generate dust and particulates which may be harmful if inhaled. The new OSHA standard requires employers to limit worker exposure to respirable crystalline silica and to take other steps to protect workers. Employers have two options:

1. Use a control method detailed in "Table 1" of the construction standard, or
2. Measure workers' exposure to silica and independently decide which dust controls work best to limit exposures

The new OSHA standard states that applicable construction employers are required to do the following:

1. Establish and implement a written exposure control plan. A sample plan can be found on page 46 of OSHA's Small Entity Compliance Guide for the Respirable Crystalline Silica Standard for Construction by clicking here: <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3902.pdf>
2. Designate a competent person to implement the exposure control plan
3. Restrict housekeeping practices that expose workers to silica
4. Offer medical exams every three years for workers required by the standard to wear a respirator for 30 or more days per year
5. Train workers on operations that result in silica exposure and ways to limit exposure
6. Keep records of workers silica exposure and medical exams

What is "Table 1"?

Table 1 of the new standard outlines various dust control methods associated with common construction tasks. Table 1 is perhaps the easiest method for contractors to comply with the new standard, particularly if they properly maintain and use equipment as directed by the manufacturer. Click here for the link to OSHA's site detailing Table 1: <http://www.osha.gov/silica/SilicaConstructionRegText.pdf>

The following table outlines certain provisions found in OSHA’s Table 1, along with compliance-related features of certain Virginia Abrasives products:

Equipment	OSHA Stated Engineering and Work Practice Control Method	VAC Equipment Compliance
<b>All Saws, Drills and Grinders</b>	Operate and maintain tool in accordance with manufacturer’s instructions to minimize dust emissions	VAC equipment has water delivery systems, or dust shrouds and ports compatible with appropriate vacuum systems. Pulse Bac vacuums offered by VAC feature a filter fractional efficiency rating of 99.97 @ .3 micron at a CFM flow rate up to 176. All vacuums also offer a “filter cleaning mechanism”.
<b>Tile Saws</b>	Use saw equipped with integrated water delivery system that continuously feeds water to the blade	Tile saws are equipped with a water tray and pump to provide water to the tile cutting blade
<b>Handheld Cutoff Saws</b>	Use saw equipped with integrated water delivery system that continuously feeds water to the blade	Cutoff saws are equipped with a water connection for hose or portable water solution
<b>Walk Behind Saws</b>	Use saw equipped with integrated water delivery system that continuously feeds water to the blade	Walk behind saws are equipped with a water connection for hose or portable water solution
<b>Rig Mounted Core Drill</b>	Use drill equipped with integrated water delivery system that continuously feeds water to the blade	Core drills are equipped with a water connection for hose or portable water solution
<b>Handheld Core Drill</b>	Use drill equipped with integrated water delivery system that continuously feeds water to the blade	Core drills are equipped with a water connection for hose or portable water solution. Use HEPA-filtered vacuum when cleaning holes.
<b>Walk Behind Grinders</b>	Use machine equipped with integrated water delivery system that continuously feeds water to the blade, or	Grinders are equipped with a water connection for providing water to the grinding tooling
	Use machine equipped with dust collection system recommended by the manufacturer	VAC sells a variety of Pulse-Bac vacuum solutions that exceed OSHA silica regulations