Crystalline silica dust is a product of high-energy mechanical processes done on any material containing silica. The dust, if inhaled may cause long-term health effects such as silicosis and lung cancer.

To protect employees and the public, steps need to be taken to prevent breathing in silica dust. Two methods of control that are easy but important are restricting access to the work site and proper housekeeping.

**Access Restriction**

When working with materials and processes that have potential to produce silica dust, the work zone needs to be restricted from general access. Steps that taken are as follows:

- Post restricted access signs next to any entranceway to the work zone. Signage should include the hazards present.
- Access is to be limited to only authorized persons. Use barriers to prevent people from entering the work zone.
- People who do enter the work zone are required to use the same level of protective personal equipment (PPE) as the workers at that work site.
- Activities such as eating, drinking, chewing gum or tobacco are discouraged in the work site.

**Housekeeping Practices**

Basic housekeeping practices are essential to practice. Silica dust particles are very small and can easily become airborne if disturbed. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has identified two acceptable methods of cleaning up silica dust.

- Wet sweeping
- HEPA-filtered vacuuming
- Dry sweeping is to be used only if the first two options are not feasible

AT NO TIME IS THE USE OF COMPRESSED AIR ALLOWED