

# Respirable Crystalline Silica

*Update for Quarries Partnership Team from . . .*



UNION EUROPÉENNE DES PRODUCTEURS DE GRANULATS  
EUROPÄISCHER GESTEINSVERBAND  
EUROPEAN AGGREGATES ASSOCIATION

**Martin Isles**

**Director, Health and Safety, MPA  
Chairman, UEPG H&S Committee**

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# Respirable Crystalline Silica

- EU 'Silica' Agreement – *a brief reminder*
- NePSi Council Report
- Lobbying 'Construction' to join NePSi
- Application by *potential* 17<sup>th</sup> Industry partner
- Preparation for 2012 NePSi Reporting
- IOM 'SHEcan' Report.

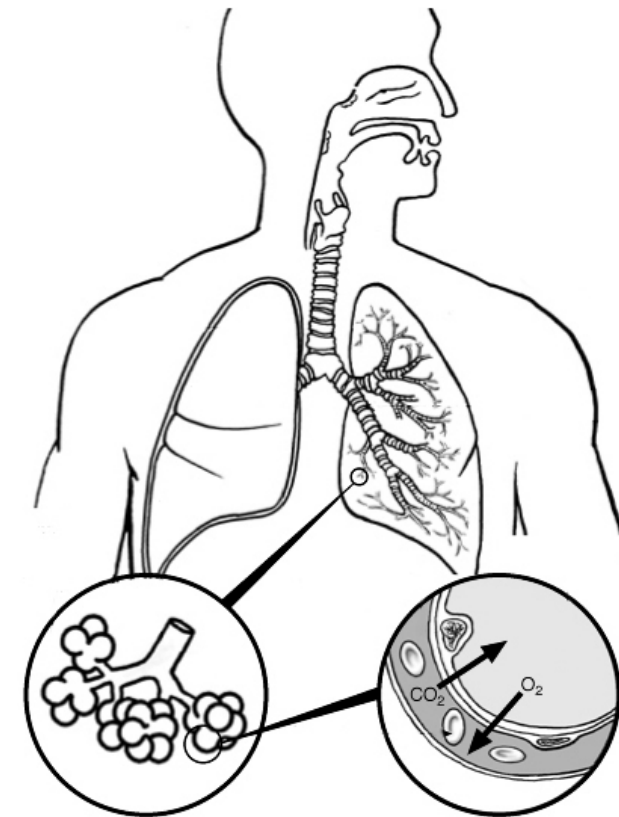
# EU 'Silica' Agreement



## Bi-partite Agreement

16 European Industries + Social Partners

- **Protecting** the health of the workforce by preventing silicosis
- **Minimizing** exposure to RCS by applying the Good Practices, and
- **Increasing** knowledge about potential health effects of RCS and about Good Practices.





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WELCOME TO THE NEPSI WEBSITE INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL DIALOGUE THE NEGOTIATION NEWS & EVENTS

**NEPSI** is the acronym for the resulting European Network for Silica formed by the Employee and Employer European sectoral associations having signed the Social Dialogue **"Agreement on Workers' Health Protection Through the Good Handling and Use of Crystalline Silica and Products Containing it"** on 25 April 2006, representing 15 industry sectors i.e. more than 2 million employees and a business exceeding € 250 billion.

#### HIGHLIGHTS AND NEWS

05/08/2011 - Four new task sheets included in the Good Practice Guide and available online - see [here](#)

01/08/2011 - Four NEPSI workshops to take place in Czech Republic, Poland, Romania in September and October 2011 - see [News & Events](#)

01/01/2011 - NEPSI DVDs can be ordered at [c.lanne@ima-europe.eu](mailto:c.lanne@ima-europe.eu)

Crystalline silica ( $\text{SiO}_2$ ) is an essential component of materials which have an abundance of uses in industry and are vital in many products and objects we use everyday: it is impossible to imagine houses without bricks, mortar or windows, cars without engines or windscreens, life without roads or other transport infrastructures and everyday items made of glass or pottery.

Although crystalline silica is ubiquitous in nature, the inhalation of fine dust containing a proportion of it may constitute a hazard that is limited to the workplace. Considering that such an exposure can be controlled, the main industries concerned by possible exposures to respirable crystalline silica agreed on appropriate and credible measures for the improvement of working conditions.

The 17 initial signatory organisations represent the aggregates, cement, ceramics, foundry, glass fibre, special glass, container glass, flat glass, industrial minerals, mineral wool, natural stones, mining, mortar and pre-cast concrete sectors. The Agreement has recently welcomed the expanded clay sector and represents to date 18 European industry sectors. It remains open for further signatures.





# Lobbying 'Construction'

European Federation  
of Building  
and Woodworkers



- UEPG-hosted meeting with Sam Hagglund  
General Secretary, EFBWW, 14 September 2011



# EU 'Silica' Agreement



- 'A.St.A.' has applied to join the EU 'Silica' Agreement
- But needs *both* social partners to join.
- A.St.A. appears to be allied to the Construction sector
- Without 'Construction' in the Agreement, EMCEF will not support entry of A.St.A.

# NePSi Reporting 2012



- **End of September 2011:** revised text guidance & translation
- **Autumn-Winter 2011:** awareness campaign, training, invitation chains, system update and translation
- **Mid-November 2011:** Beta testing of the online system
- **16 January – 16 March 2012: Reporting deadline for companies**
- **30 April 2012: Reporting deadline for EU associations**
- **May 2012:** Draft NEPSI 2012 Summary Report
- **June 2012:** NEPSI Council
- **July 2012:** Summary Report to be sent to EC and national authorities.

# 'SHEcan' Report



- Construction and the Utilities: sectors with highest mean exposure
- Benefits of a Europe-wide OEL outweigh costs of compliance
- OEL could require workers to be wearing RPE constantly
- Costs of meeting OEL "could lead to company closures"
- Potential for "avoiding" cases of lung cancer attributable to past exposures to RCS (if Europe-wide OEL introduced) said to represent about 2.45% of all lung cancer deaths amongst exposed workers

## **Carcinogens Directive:**

- substitution where technically possible (regardless of cost)
- closed systems wherever technically possible
- reduce exposure as low as technically possible



## Occupational Exposure Limits in mg/m<sup>3</sup> 8 hrs TWA Respirable Quartz: EU27 + Norway & Switzerland

0.025	0.05	0.07	0.075	0.1	0.15	0.2	0.3
Italy	Belgium	Bulgaria	Netherlands	Czech Republic	Austria	Finland	Poland
Portugal	Ireland			Denmark	Hungary		
	Spain			Estonia	Luxembourg		
				France	Slovenia		
<b>ACGIH (USA) recommdtn</b>	<b>NIOSH (USA) recommdtn</b>			Greece	Switzerland		
				Lithuania			
				Malta			
	<b>AIOH (Australia) recommdtn</b>			Norway			
				Romania			
				Slovakia			
	<b>HSE (GB) when valid to measure in half-shift</b>			Sweden			
				United Kingdom			

**Germany:** Employers obliged to minimise exposure as much as possible  
**Australia** current OEL = 0.1 (AIOH recommending halving the current OEL)  
**USA** OEL for 98% Quartz = 0.1 (NIOSH & ACGIH recommending lower limits)