

KEYWORDS: CONCRETE; SILICA

10-15 MINUTES

# Topic: Concrete



## IDEAS FOR YOUR TALK:

- *People remember facts better when they're interactive and visual.*
- *People remember stories better than raw facts: think of a personal story that you can share.*
- *YouTube is another good source of information and offers many safety videos and demonstrations. Select only videos that are high-quality.*

## Explain dangers:

*Cement dust can irritate your skin. The dust reacts with sweat or damp clothing to form a corrosive solution.*

*Wet concrete or mortar can burn your skin or cause skin ulcers if it falls inside your boots or gloves or soaks through your clothes*

*The burns caused by concrete may be slow. You may not feel anything until several hours later. That's why it's important to wash concrete off your skin right away.*

*Beware of silica, an ingredient in concrete.*

*Repeated exposure to airborne silica can lead to silicosis, a disabling and often fatal lung disease. There may also be a link between silica dust and cancer.*

## Demonstrate:

*Show your crew where to find the safety data sheet (SDS) for the type of concrete you're using on site. Review the handling and storage procedures, PPE requirements, and first aid measures.*

## 1. SUGGESTED ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS:

- Who will use concrete today ?
- What is the main risk involved in it ?
- Has anyone heard of an incident or accident involving concrete ?

## 2. TALKING POINTS:

### USING SILICA :

- Make sure you have dust control measures in place.
- Where possible, wet-cut rather than dry-cut blocks and other concrete products.
- Wear a mask and Eye protection

### MIXING CONCRETE

- Wear a mask and Eye protection when pouring or mixing dry cement.
- Wear Work upwind from cement dust.

### WORKING WITH CONCRETE

- Wear coveralls with long sleeves and full-length pants. Tuck pants inside boots and duct-tape the top to keep wet mortar and concrete out.
- Use waterproof boots high enough to keep concrete from flowing over the top.
- Wear acid-resistant rubber gloves (e.g., nitrile or butyl). Pull sleeves over gloves or tuck them inside gloves.
- Remove rings and watches because wet concrete can collect underneath and burn your skin.
- After working with concrete, always wash your hands before eating, smoking, drinking, or using the toilet.
- Never wash your hands with water from buckets used for cleaning tools.
- If your skin comes in contact with concrete, wash with cold running water as soon as possible. Flush out any open sores or cuts. Get medical attention if your skin still feels like it's burning.
- If your eyes are exposed to concrete, rinse with cold tap water for at least 15 minutes. **Get medical attention if necessary.**

## 3. CLOSING QUESTIONS:

- Do you have questions on this subject, inspection or safe use?
- Are you aware of a risk on this jobsite that shouldn't be?



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