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CPWR's Updated 'Working Safely with Silica' Website & Exposure Control Planning Tool

February 26, 2026

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Housekeeping

- Today's webinar will be recorded and automatically shared via follow-up email.
- The recording and slides will also be posted on cpwr.com/webinars.
- Attendees are automatically muted! Please submit panelist questions via the Q&A box.
- Spanish audio is available via simultaneous interpretation

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Simultaneous Interpretation
Interpretación simultánea

WINDOWS - MAC (Navegador web/*Browser*)

1. En los controles del seminario web, haga clic en **Interpretación** 
2. Haga clic en el idioma que desee escuchar.
3. (Opcional) Para escuchar solo el idioma interpretado, haga clic en **Silenciar audio original**.

Nota: Hay que unirse al audio del seminario web a través de audio o VoIP de la computadora. No podrá escuchar la interpretación de idiomas si utiliza las funciones de audio de teléfono llamada directa o recibir llamada.

1. *In your webinar controls, click **Interpretation*** 
2. *Click the language that you would like to hear.*
3. *(Optional) To hear the interpreted language only, click **Mute Original Audio**.*

***Note**: You must join the webinar audio through your computer audio/VoIP. You cannot listen to language interpretation if you use the dial-in or call me phone audio features.*

ANDROID - iOS (Aplicación móvil/*Mobile App*)

1. En los controles del seminario web, toque los puntos suspensivos •••
2. Toque **Interpretación de idiomas.**
3. Toque el idioma que desee escuchar.
4. (Opcional) Toque el botón de alternancia **Silenciar audio original**.
5. Haga clic en **Finalizado**.

Nota: No podrá escuchar la interpretación de idiomas si utiliza las funciones de audio de teléfono llamada directa o recibir llamada.

1. *In your webinar controls, tap the ellipses* •••
2. *Tap **Language Interpretation**.*
3. *Tap the language you want to hear.*
4. *(Optional) Tap the toggle to **Mute Original Audio**.*
5. *Click **Done**.*

Note: *You cannot listen to language interpretation if you use the dial-in or call me phone audio features.*

Webinar Agenda

- ✓ Overview of Standard
- ✓ History of Work Safely with Silica (silica-safe.org)
- ✓ How to use the site
- ✓ Q&A

OSHA's Construction Silica Standard: CFR 1926.1153

- Published on **March 25, 2016**
- Went into effect in full on **June 23, 2018**
- **Previous PELs did not adequately protect workers**
- Exposure can cause cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, including emphysema and bronchitis, and kidney disease
- Extensive epidemiologic evidence that lung cancer and silicosis occur at exposure levels below 100 $\mu g/m^3$

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Scope of Construction Standard

- Construction-specific (with separate standards for general industry, maritime, oil & gas)
- Three forms of silica: quartz, cristobalite and tridymite
- Exposures from chipping, cutting, sawing, drilling, grinding, sanding, and crushing of concrete, brick, block, rock, and stone products (such as in construction operations)
- Exposures from using sand products (such as glass manufacturing, foundries, and sand blasting)
- Applies to ALL operations in construction where there is exposure to respirable crystalline silica, **unless** the exposure is going to remain under 25 micrograms/cubic meter of air as an 8-hour Time Waited Average under any foreseeable conditions.

Contents

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Specified Exposure Control Methods (Table 1)

- Table 1 in the construction standard matches **18 tasks** with **effective dust control methods** and, in some cases, respirator requirements.
- Employers that fully and properly implement controls on Table 1 do not have to:
  - Comply with the PEL
  - Conduct exposure assessments for employees engaged in those tasks
- **Presence of controls is not sufficient.** Employers are required to ensure that:
  - Controls are present and maintained
  - Employees understand the proper use of those controls and use them accordingly

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Specified Exposure Control Methods (Table 1)

- Stationary masonry saws
- Handheld power saws
- Handheld power saws for fiber cement board
- Walk-behind saws
- Drivable saws
- Rig-mounted core saws or drills
- Handheld and stand-mounted drills
- Dowel drilling rigs for concrete
- Vehicle-mounted drilling rigs for rock and concrete
- Jackhammers and handheld powered chipping tools
- Handheld grinders for mortar removal (tuckpointing)
- Handheld grinders for other than mortar removal
- Walk-behind milling machines and floor grinders
- Small drivable milling machines
- Large drivable milling machines
- Crushing machines
- Heavy equipment and utility vehicles to abrade or fracture silica materials
- Heavy equipment and utility vehicles for grading and excavating

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Specified Exposure Control Methods (Table 1)

- Respirators are required where exposures above the PEL are likely to persist *despite* full and proper implementation of the specified engineering and work practice controls.
- Where respirators required, they must be used by all employees engaged in the task for entire duration of the task
- Provisions specify how to determine when respirators are required for an employee engaged in more than one task

Alternative Exposure Control Methods

1. **Permissible Exposure Limit:**
   - PEL = 50 µg/m^3 as an 8-hour TWA
   - Action Level = 25 µg/m^3 as an 8-hour TWA

2. **Exposure Assessment:** Required if exposures are or may reasonably be expected to be at or above action level of 25 µg/m^3
   - The performance option - any combination of air monitoring data or objective data
   - The scheduled monitoring option - prescribes a schedule for performing initial and periodic personal monitoring

Alternative Exposure Control Methods

3. **Methods of Compliance (Hierarchy of Controls)**
    - Employers can use any engineering or work practice controls to limit exposures to the PEL
    - Respirators permitted where PEL cannot be achieved with engineering and work practice controls

Cutting block without vs. with engineering controls

Respiratory Protection

- Must comply with 29 CFR 1910.134
- Respirators required where specified by Table 1, **or** for exposures above the PEL:
  - While installing or implementing controls or work practices
  - For tasks where controls or work practices are not feasible
  - When feasible controls cannot reduce exposures to the PEL

Housekeeping

- When it can contribute to exposure, employers must not allow:
  - Dry sweeping or brushing
  - Use of compressed air for cleaning surfaces or clothing, unless it is used with ventilation to capture the dust
- Those methods can be used if no other methods like HEPA vacuums, wet sweeping, or use of ventilation with compressed air are feasible

Written Exposure Control Plan

- Tasks involving exposure to respirable crystalline silica
- Engineering controls, work practices, and respiratory protection for each task
- Housekeeping measures used to limit exposure
- Procedures used to restrict access, when necessary to limit exposures

Competent Person

- Implements the written exposure control plan
- Capable of identifying existing and foreseeable respirable crystalline silica hazards, who has authorization to take prompt corrective measures
- Makes regular inspections of job sites, materials, and equipment

Medical Surveillance

- Employers must offer medical examinations to workers who will be required to wear a respirator under the standard for **30 or more days** a year.
- Employers must offer examinations **every three years** to workers who continue to be exposed above the trigger
- Includes medical and work history, physical exam, chest X-ray, and pulmonary function test (TB test on initial exam only)

Medical Opinion

- Worker receives **report** with detailed medical findings, work restrictions, and recommendations for further evaluation or treatment
- Employer receives an **opinion** that only describes limitations on respirator use, and *if the worker gives written consent*, recommendations on exposure and additional examination

Communication of Hazards

- Employers required to comply with hazard communication standard (HCS) (29 CFR 1910.1200)
- Address: Cancer, lung effects, immune system effects, and kidney effects as part of HCS
- Train workers on health hazards, tasks resulting in exposure, workplace protections, the identity of the competent person, and the medical surveillance program

Recordkeeping

- Must maintain records per 29 CFR 1910.1020 for:
  - Air monitoring data
  - Objective data
  - Medical records

For more information... www.osha.gov/silica-crystalline

Silica, Crystalline

- Health Effects
- Construction
- General Industry and Maritime
- Sampling and Analysis
- FAQs
- **Workers' Rights**

CONTROL SILICA DUST

Breathe Easier

Overview

Crystalline silica is a common mineral found in the earth's crust. Materials like sand, stone, concrete, and mortar contain crystalline silica. It is also used to make products such as glass, pottery, ceramics, bricks, and artificial stone.

Respirable crystalline silica – very small particles at least 100 times smaller than ordinary sand you might find on beaches and playgrounds – is created when cutting, sawing, grinding, drilling, and crushing stone, rock, concrete, brick, block, and mortar. Activities such as abrasive blasting with sand; sawing brick or concrete; sanding or drilling into concrete walls; grinding mortar; manufacturing brick, concrete blocks, stone countertops, or ceramic products; and cutting or crushing stone result in worker exposures to respirable crystalline silica dust. Industrial sand used in certain operations, such as foundry work and hydraulic fracturing (fracking), is also a source of respirable crystalline silica exposure. About 2.3 million people in the U.S. are exposed to silica at work.

Workers who inhale these very small crystalline silica particles are at increased risk of developing serious silica-related diseases, including:

- Silicosis, an incurable lung disease that can lead to disability and death;
- Lung cancer;
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD); and
- Kidney disease.

To protect workers exposed to respirable crystalline silica, OSHA has issued two respirable crystalline silica standards: one for construction, and the other for general industry and maritime.

Highlights

- Hazard Analysis: Lessons and Findings from OSHA's Emphasis Program on Silica in Engineered Stone (2024) NEW
- Hazard Alert: Worker Exposure to Silica during Countertop Manufacturing, Finishing and Installation [Español]
- Small Entity Compliance Guides
  - Construction
  - General Industry and Maritime [Español]
- FAQs for the Construction Industry
- FAQs for General Industry
- Controlling Silica Dust in Construction – Videos for Table 1 Tasks
- Table 1 Task Fact Sheets for Construction
- Video: Protecting Workers from Silica Hazards in the Workplace
- Sample Training Powerpoints
  - Construction
  - General Industry and Maritime
- National Emphasis Program – Respirable Crystalline Silica
- Inspection Procedures for the Respirable Crystalline Silica Standards
- Silica Rule Updates
- Submit a question
- OSHA News Release-New Silica Initiative

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Development of Work Safely with Silica

- Led by Eileen Betit in response to the CPWR-NIOSH-OSHA r2p Working Group establishing silica as a joint outreach priority in **2010**
- Developed with input from industry focus groups
- Launched in November **2012**
- Expanded to include Oil & Gas in **2018**
- Re-launched in February **2026**

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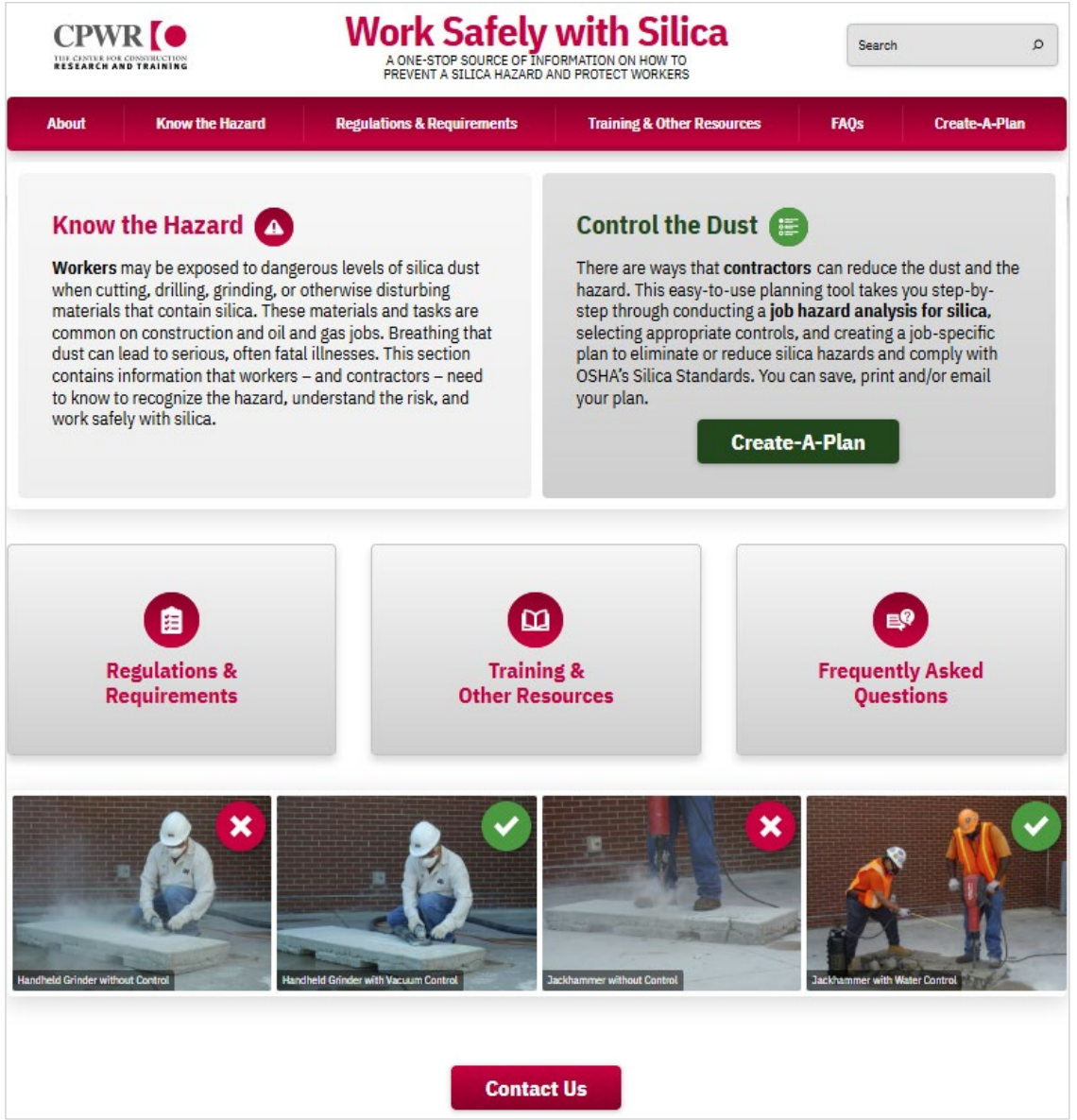
Work Safely with Silica

Homepage



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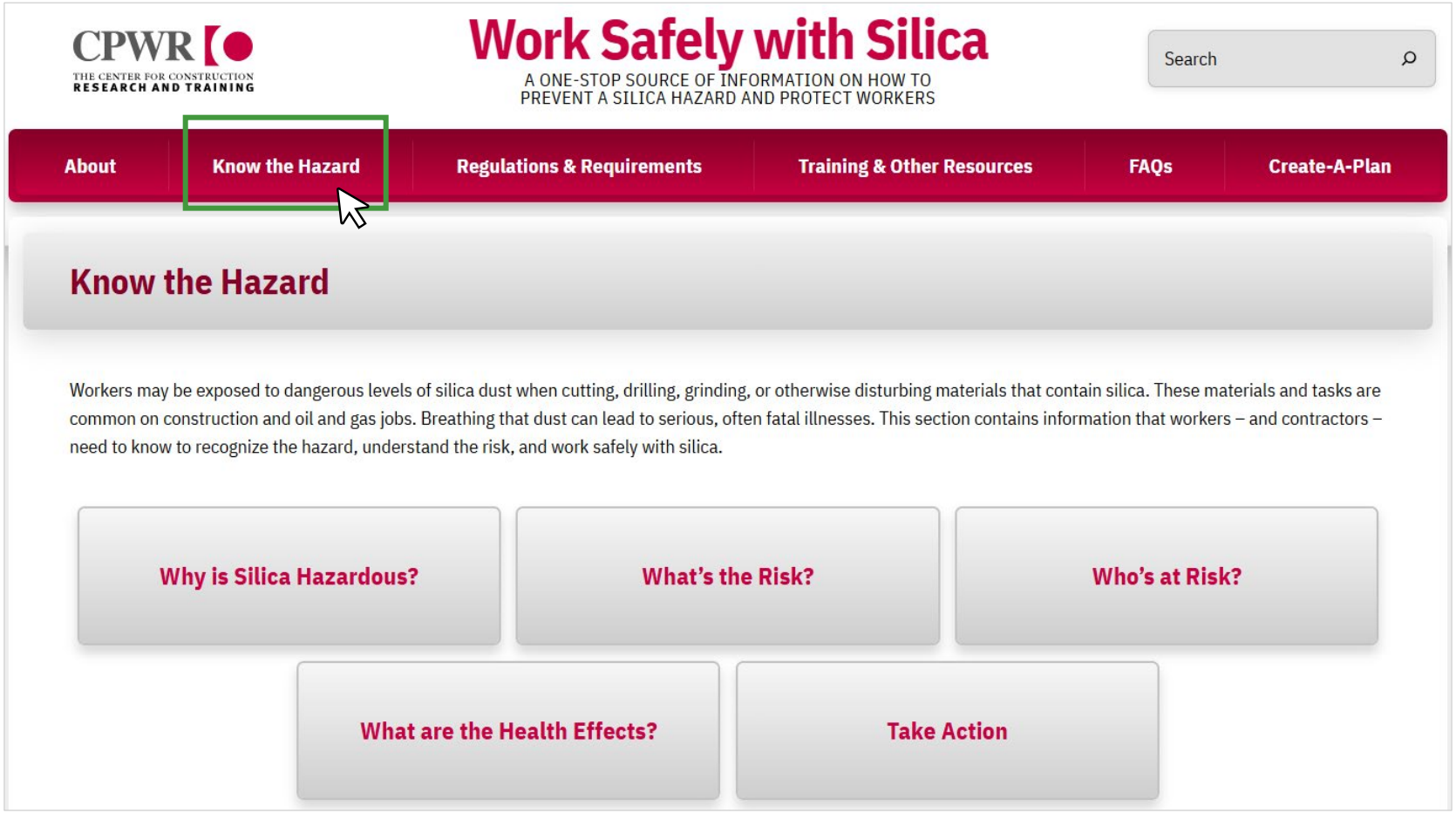
Know the Hazard



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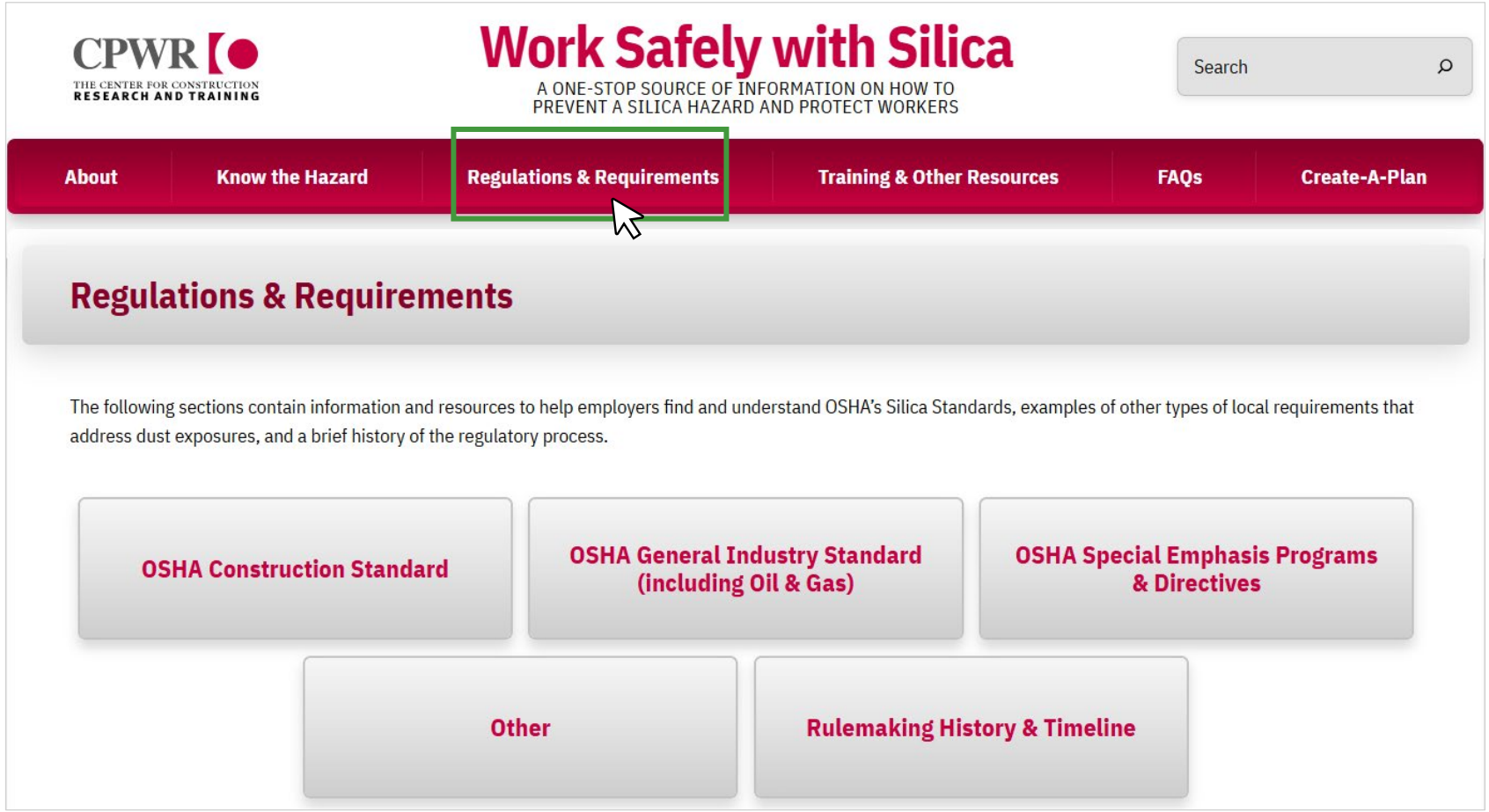
Regulations & Requirements



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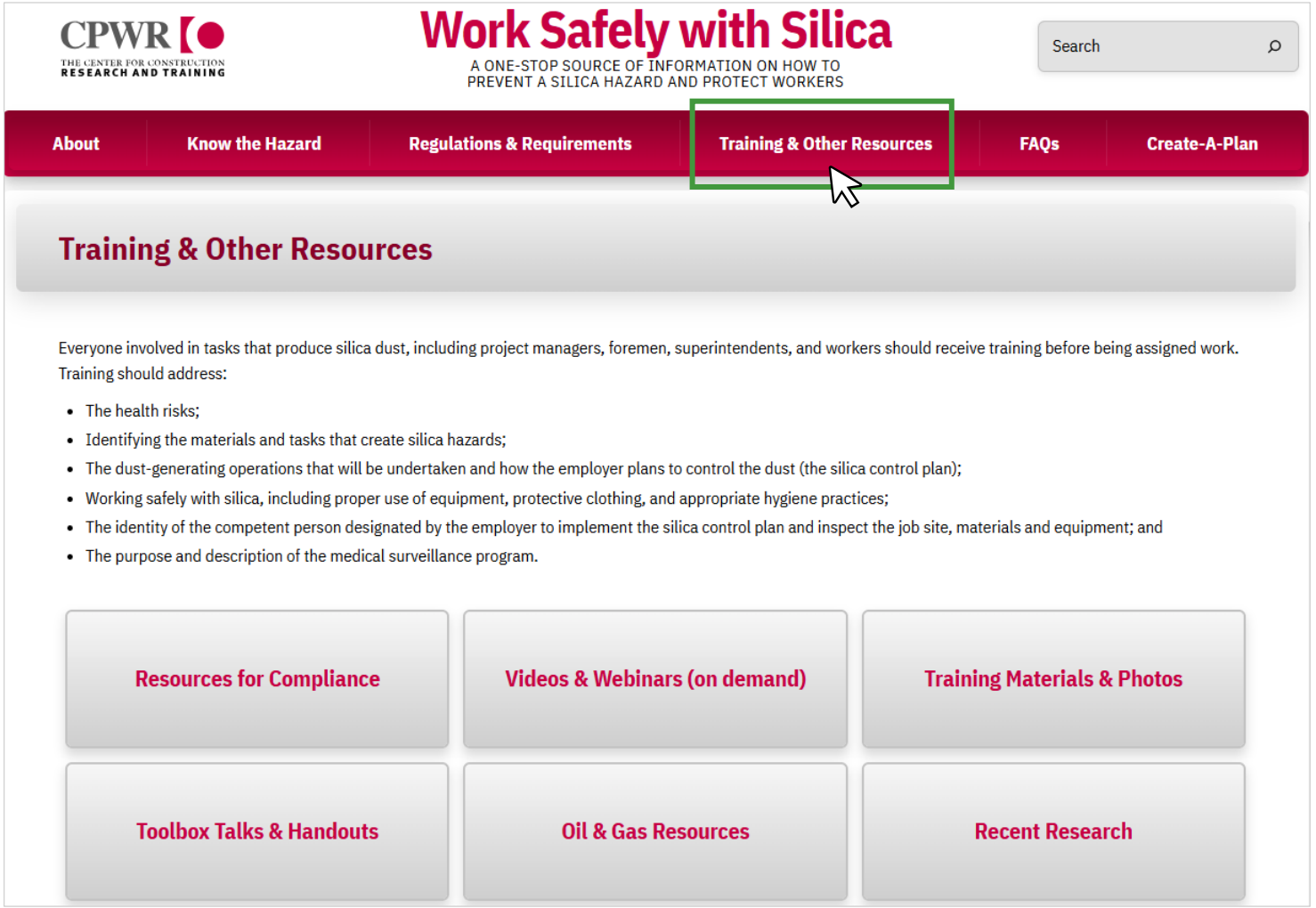
Training & Other Resources



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Work Safely with Silica

Training & Other Resources > Resources for Compliance

Table 1 – Equipment Names and Best Practice Tips

Table 1 – Equipment Names and Best Practice Tips – Update September 2018

- Includes equipment terms commonly used by different trades and in different geographic areas
- 'Best practice' tips are intended to help employers and their employees operate the equipment-control options effectively and are based on 1) OSHA's Small Entity Compliance Guide for the Respirable Crystalline Silica Standard for Construction; 2) OSHA's Frequently Asked Questions ("FAQs") for the Construction Industry; 3) silica standard's Table 1; 4) manufacturer specifications; and 5) craft worker/contractor input based on experience in the field.

Equipment/ Control	Photo & Video	Engineering, Work Practice Control Methods & Required Respiratory Protection	Best Practice Tips
(i) Stationary masonry saws Other Names: Table saw Brick/block saw Tile saw[4]	 *Photo courtesy of the International Masonry Institute & OSHA*  *Video courtesy of OSHA (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtoBc34EbBo)* English & Spanish subtitle options included.	**CONTROL: water** • Use saw equipped with integrated water delivery system that continuously feeds water to the blade. • Operate and maintain tool in accordance with manufacturer's instructions to minimize dust emissions. **Required Respiratory Protection:** • ≤4 hours/shift: NONE • >4 hours/shift: NONE	OSHA[1] requires the employer to ensure that: • The saw is equipped with an integrated water delivery system (commercially developed specifically for the type of tool in use) • An adequate supply of water for dust suppression is used • The spray nozzle is working properly to apply water at the point of dust generation • The spray nozzle is not clogged or damaged • All hoses and connections are intact • Water is applied at least at the flow rate specified by the manufacturer • Additional exhaust is provided as needed to minimize the accumulation of visible airborne dust when operating indoors or in an enclosed space (area where airborne dust can build up) • Additional means of exhaust could include: portable fans (e.g. box fans, floor fans, axial fans, oscillating fans), portable ventilation systems, or other systems that increase air movement and assist in the removal and dispersion of airborne dust[4] • "Indoors or in enclosed areas" refer to any areas where, without the assistance of forced ventilation, the dispersal of airborne dust can be impeded and concentrations can build up. Parking garages, pits, trenches, empty swimming pools, open-top structures with 3 walls, or other structures with limited air movement could be considered enclosed[4] Tips for this tool continued on next page.

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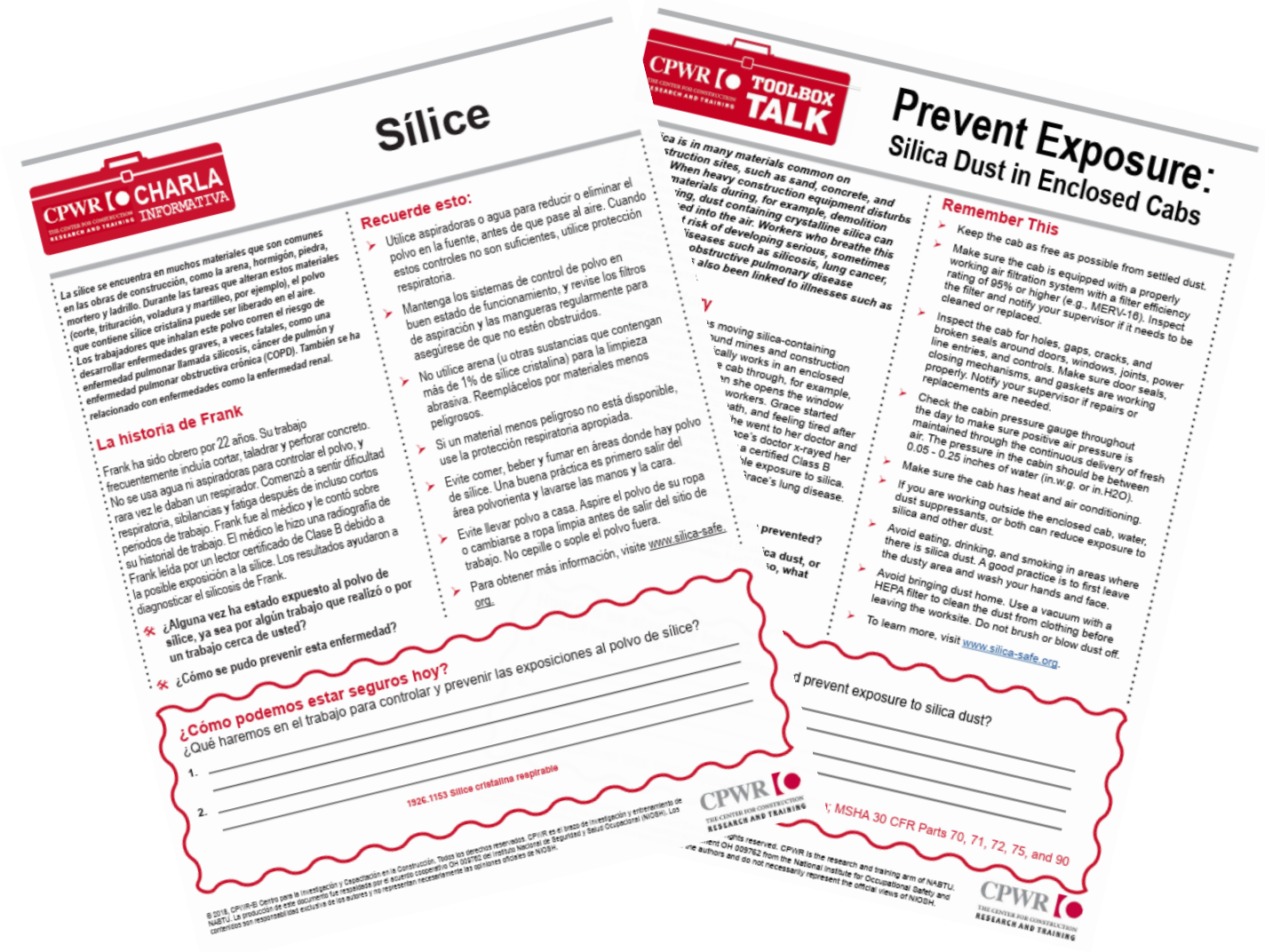
Training & Other Resources > Toolbox Talks & Handouts

CPWR Toolbox Talks (English & Spanish)

- Silica
- Prevent Exposure: Silica Dust in Enclosed Cabs



Work Safely with Silica

Training & Other Resources > Toolbox Talks & Handouts

CPWR Hazard Alert Cards (English & Spanish)

- Silica
- Protect Workers from Silica Dust: Working in an Enclosed Cab

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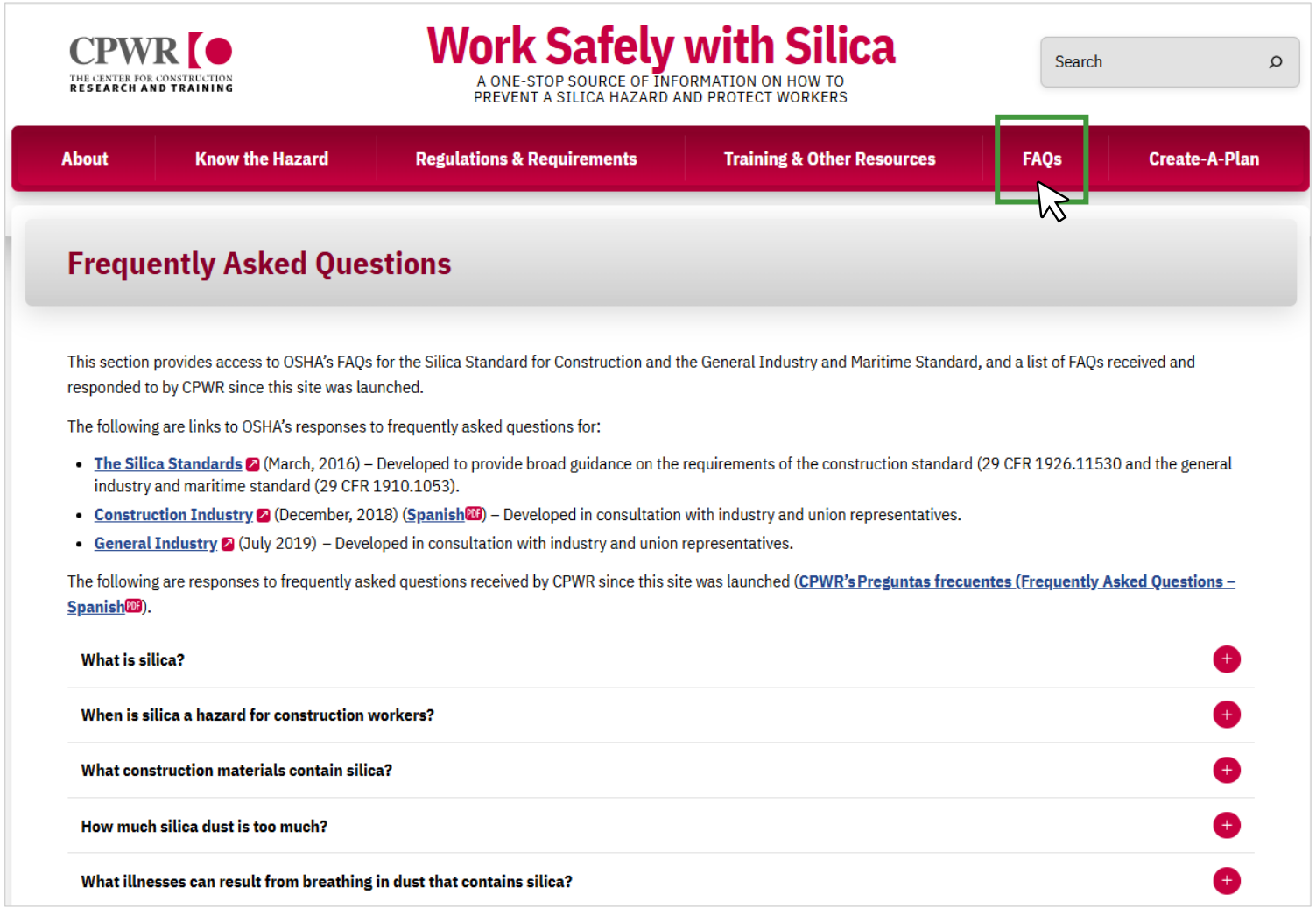
Frequently Asked Questions



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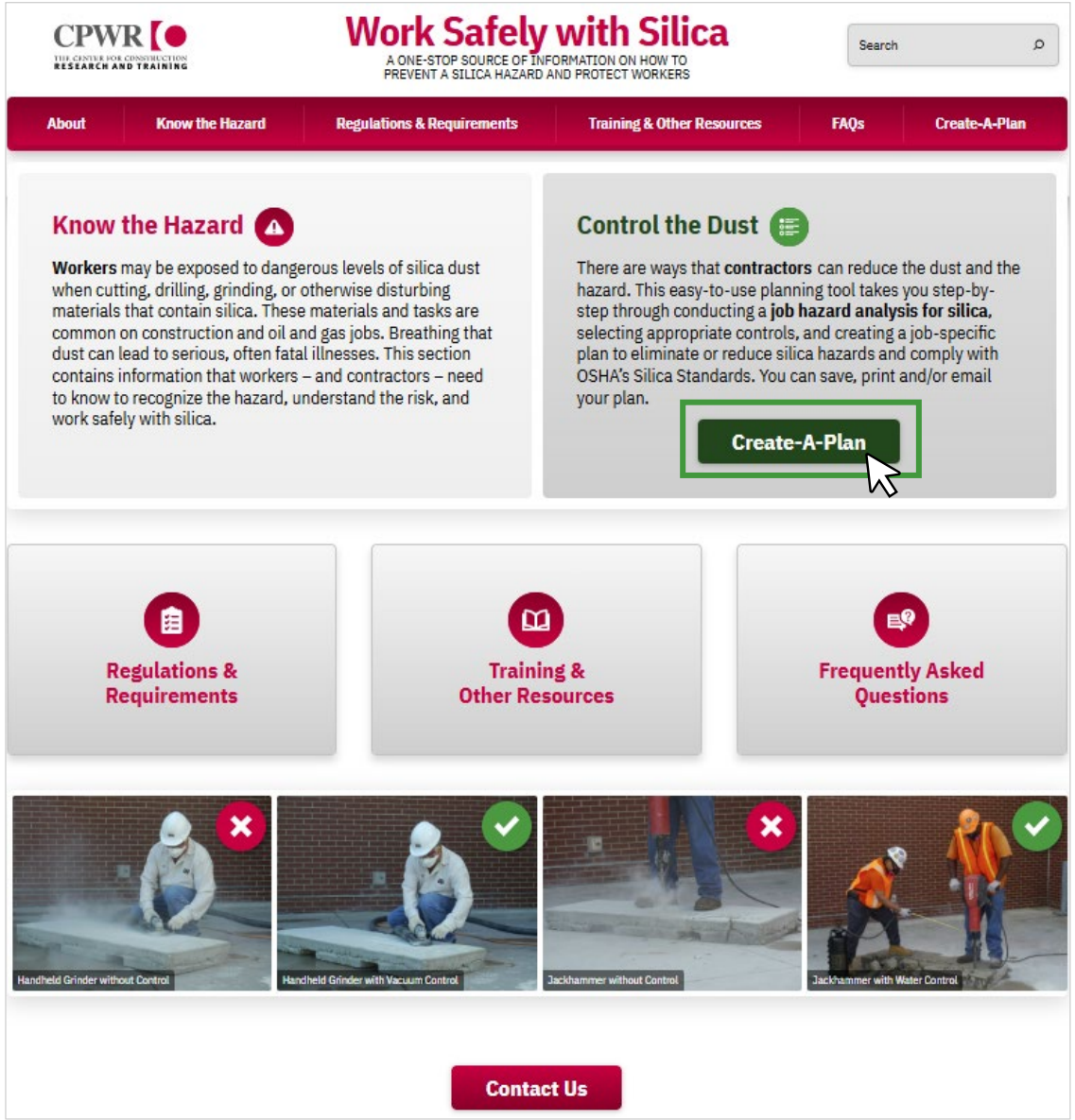
Create-A-Plan



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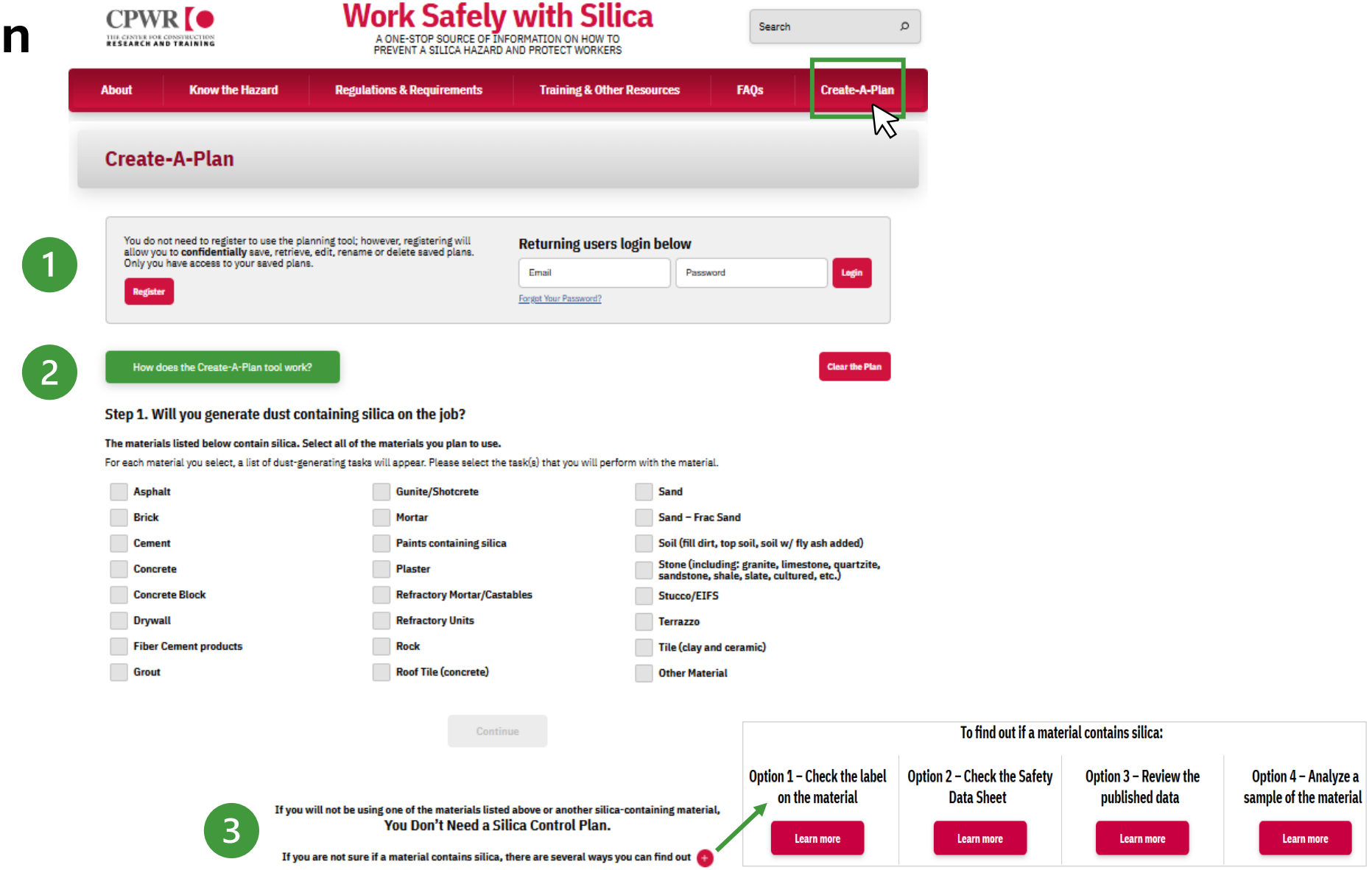

Work Safely with Silica

Create-A-Plan: Step 1

Step 1. Will you generate dust containing silica on the job?

The materials listed below contain silica. Select all of the materials you plan to use.

For each material you select, a list of dust-generating tasks will appear. Please select the task(s) that you will perform with the material.

- [ ] **Asphalt**
- [x] **Brick**

  Select one or more tasks:

  - [ ] Abrasive blasting
  - [ ] Bushhammering
  - [x] Cutting/sawing
  - [ ] Demolishing/disturbing
  - [ ] Drilling/coring
  - [ ] Earthmoving
  - [ ] Frac sand cleanup
  - [ ] Frac sand mixing
  - [ ] Frac sand offloading
  - [ ] Frac sand onloading
  - [ ] Frac sand transferring
  - [ ] Grinding
  - [ ] Jackhammering
  - [ ] Milling
  - [ ] Mixing/pouring
  - [ ] Polishing
  - [ ] Sacking/patching
  - [ ] Sanding
  - [ ] Scabbling
  - [ ] Scarifying
  - [ ] Scraping
  - [ ] Sweeping/cleaning up
  - [ ] Well mixing/pumping
  - [ ] Other
- [ ] **Cement**
- [x] **Concrete**

  Select one or more tasks:

  - [ ] Abrasive blasting
  - [ ] Bushhammering
  - [ ] Cutting/sawing
  - [ ] Demolishing/disturbing
  - [x] Drilling/coring
  - [ ] Earthmoving
  - [ ] Frac sand cleanup
  - [ ] Frac sand mixing
  - [ ] Frac sand offloading
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  - [ ] Frac sand transferring
  - [ ] Grinding
  - [ ] Jackhammering
  - [ ] Milling
  - [ ] Mixing/pouring
  - [ ] Polishing
  - [ ] Sacking/patching
  - [ ] Sanding
  - [ ] Scabbling
  - [ ] Scarifying
  - [ ] Scraping
  - [ ] Sweeping/cleaning up
  - [ ] Well mixing/pumping
  - [ ] Other
- [ ] **Concrete Block**
- [ ] **Drywall**
- [ ] **Fiber Cement products**
- [ ] **Grout**
- [ ] **Gunite/Shotcrete**
- [ ] **Mortar**
- [ ] **Paints containing silica**
- [ ] **Plaster**
- [ ] **Refractory Mortar/Castables**
- [ ] **Refractory Units**
- [ ] **Rock**
- [ ] **Roof Tile (concrete)**
- [ ] **Sand**
- [ ] **Sand – Frac Sand**
- [ ] **Soil (fill dirt, top soil, soil w/ fly ash added)**
- [ ] **Stone (including: granite, limestone, quartzite, sandstone, shale, slate, cultured, etc.)**
- [ ] **Stucco/EIFS**
- [ ] **Terrazzo**
- [ ] **Tile (clay and ceramic)**
- [ ] **Other Material**

Continue

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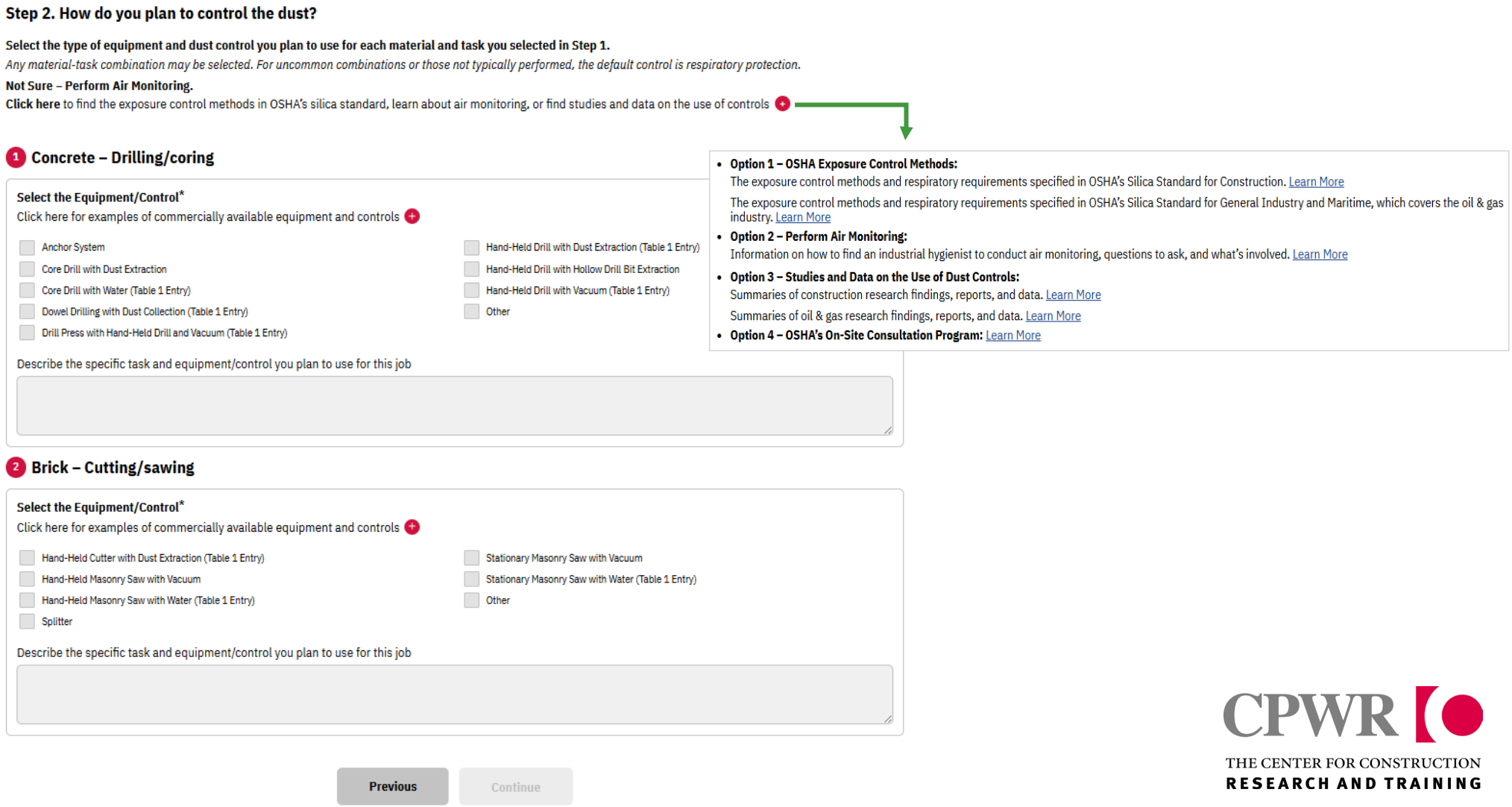
Create-A-Plan: Step 2



Step 2. How do you plan to control the dust?

Select the type of equipment and dust control you plan to use for each material and task you selected in Step 1.

Any material-task combination may be selected. For uncommon combinations or those not typically performed, the default control is respiratory protection.

Not Sure – Perform Air Monitoring.

Click here to find the exposure control methods in OSHA's silica standard, learn about air monitoring, or find studies and data on the use of controls

- **Option 1 – OSHA Exposure Control Methods:**
  The exposure control methods and respiratory requirements specified in OSHA's Silica Standard for Construction. Learn More
  The exposure control methods and respiratory requirements specified in OSHA's Silica Standard for General Industry and Maritime, which covers the oil & gas industry. Learn More
- **Option 2 – Perform Air Monitoring:**
  Information on how to find an industrial hygienist to conduct air monitoring, questions to ask, and what's involved. Learn More
- **Option 3 – Studies and Data on the Use of Dust Controls:**
  Summaries of construction research findings, reports, and data. Learn More
  Summaries of oil & gas research findings, reports, and data. Learn More
- **Option 4 – OSHA's On-Site Consultation Program:** Learn More

1 Concrete – Drilling/coring

Select the Equipment/Control*

Click here for examples of commercially available equipment and controls

- Anchor System
- Core Drill with Dust Extraction
- Core Drill with Water (Table 1 Entry)
- Dowel Drilling with Dust Collection (Table 1 Entry)
- Drill Press with Hand-Held Drill and Vacuum (Table 1 Entry)
- Hand-Held Drill with Dust Extraction (Table 1 Entry)
- Hand-Held Drill with Hollow Drill Bit Extraction
- Hand-Held Drill with Vacuum (Table 1 Entry)
- Other

Describe the specific task and equipment/control you plan to use for this job

2 Brick – Cutting/sawing

Select the Equipment/Control*

Click here for examples of commercially available equipment and controls

- Hand-Held Cutter with Dust Extraction (Table 1 Entry)
- Hand-Held Masonry Saw with Vacuum
- Hand-Held Masonry Saw with Water (Table 1 Entry)
- Splitter
- Stationary Masonry Saw with Vacuum
- Stationary Masonry Saw with Water (Table 1 Entry)
- Other

Describe the specific task and equipment/control you plan to use for this job

Previous | Continue

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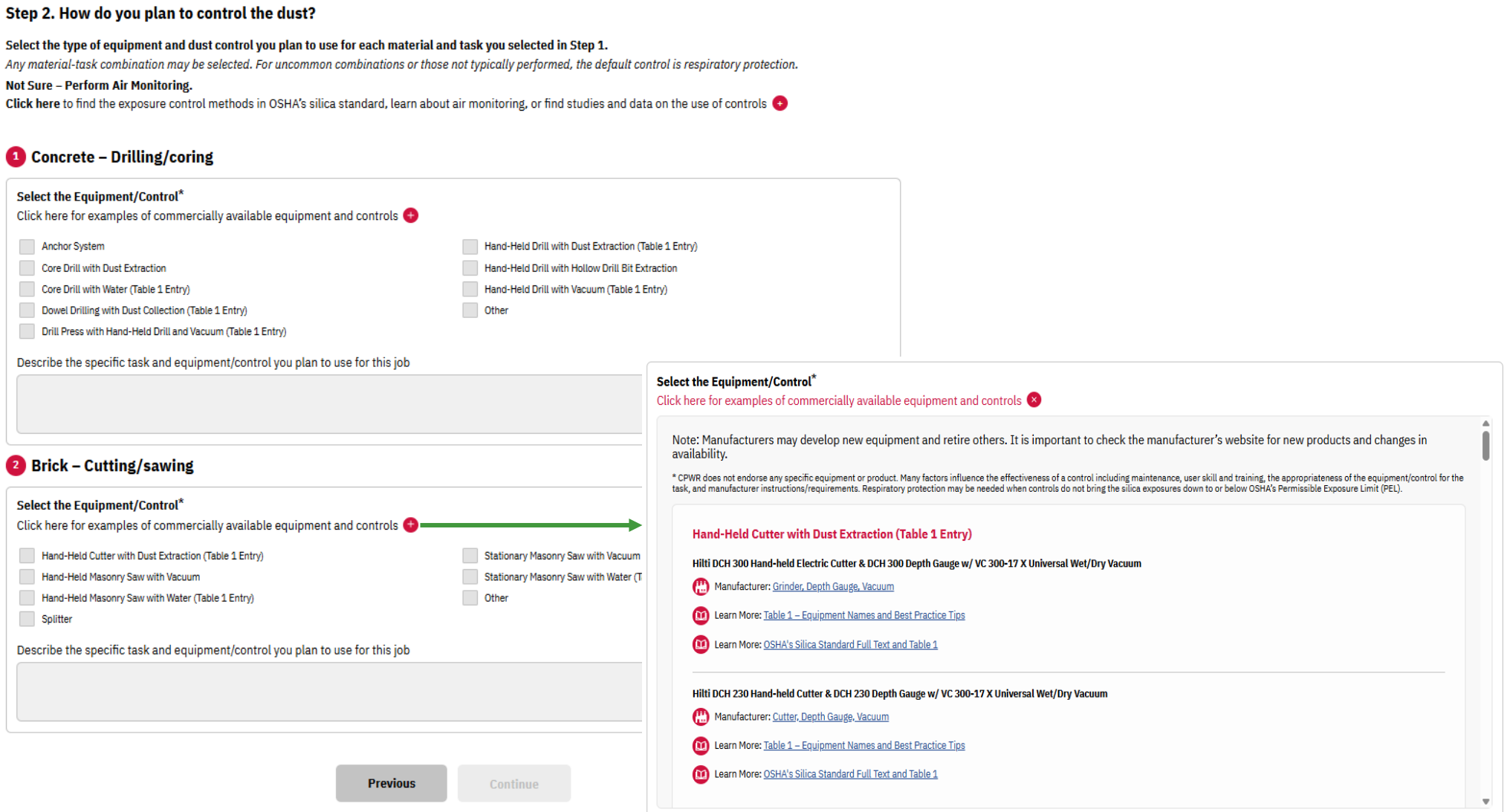
Create-A-Plan: Step 2



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Describe the specific task and equipment/control you plan to use for this job

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- Stationary Masonry Saw with Vacuum
- Stationary Masonry Saw with Water (T
- Other

Describe the specific task and equipment/control you plan to use for this job

Previous | Continue

Select the Equipment/Control*

Click here for examples of commercially available equipment and controls

Note: Manufacturers may develop new equipment and retire others. It is important to check the manufacturer's website for new products and changes in availability.

* CPWR does not endorse any specific equipment or product. Many factors influence the effectiveness of a control including maintenance, user skill and training, the appropriateness of the equipment/control for the task, and manufacturer instructions/requirements. Respiratory protection may be needed when controls do not bring the silica exposures down to or below OSHA's Permissible Exposure Limit (PEL).

Hand-Held Cutter with Dust Extraction (Table 1 Entry)

Hilti DCH 300 Hand-held Electric Cutter & DCH 300 Depth Gauge w/ VC 300-17 X Universal Wet/Dry Vacuum

Manufacturer: Grinder, Depth Gauge, Vacuum

Learn More: Table 1 – Equipment Names and Best Practice Tips

Learn More: OSHA's Silica Standard Full Text and Table 1

Hilti DCH 230 Hand-held Cutter & DCH 230 Depth Gauge w/ VC 300-17 X Universal Wet/Dry Vacuum

Manufacturer: Cutter, Depth Gauge, Vacuum

Learn More: Table 1 – Equipment Names and Best Practice Tips

Learn More: OSHA's Silica Standard Full Text and Table 1

Work Safely with Silica

Create-A-Plan: Step 3

Step 3. Complete your Silica Control Plan

Company

Robert's Construction LLC

Person Completing the Plan/Title

Bob the Builder

Jobsite/Project: (name, location, etc.)

Bobsville

Description of Work

example example example example example example example

Please fill in the name and title of the competent person for silica on a construction project or responsible person on an oil and gas project.

Click here for an explanation of the competent person's role and requirements under the construction standard 29 CFR 1926.1153 (g)(4).
Click here for an explanation of the responsible person's role on oil and gas projects and what is required to implement a general industry plan under 29 CFR 1910.1053(f).

Wendy

Exposure Assessment and Controls

1

Material
Concrete

Task
Drilling/coring

Equipment and Control(s)
Drill Press with Hand-Held Drill and Vacuum (Table 1 Entry)

Task/Control Description
example example example example example example example example

2

Material
Brick

Task
Cutting/sawing

Equipment and Control(s)
Hand-Held Masonry Saw with Water (Table 1 Entry)

Task/Control Description
example2 example2 example2 example2 example2 example2 example2 example2 example2

Please describe the procedures to restrict access to construction work areas as required by 29 CFR 1926.1153 (g)(1)(iv), which requires:

"A description of the procedures used to restrict access to work areas, when necessary, to minimize the number of employees exposed to respirable crystalline silica and their level of exposure, including exposures generated by other employees or sole proprietors."

For the oil and gas industry, please describe the procedures to establish, demarcate, and limit access to regulated areas as required by 29 CFR 1910.1053(e).

Click here for an explanation of the general industry requirement.

example example example example example example example example

Please use the space below to describe the training that will be provided to workers engaged in dust-producing tasks and those working nearby.

Click here for the construction requirements under 1926.1153(i)(2).
Click here for an explanation of the elements of a training program for oil and gas workers under 1910.1053(j)(3).

example example example example example example example example

Please describe the housekeeping measures that will be used on the project to limit employee exposure to respirable crystalline silica as required by 29 CFR 1926.1153 (f) in construction or 29 CFR 1910.1053(h) in oil and gas.

Click here to learn more about recommended housekeeping activities for construction.
Click here for oil and gas recommended housekeeping activities.

example example example example example example example example

Please use the space below to describe the medical surveillance that will be provided.

Click here to learn about medical surveillance requirements for construction (29 CFR 1926.1153(h))
Click here for oil and gas medical surveillance requirements (29 CFR 1910.1053(i)).

example example example example example example example example

Please use the space below to describe other things that need to be taken into consideration when controlling dust on this project.

Click here to learn more about possible things to consider.

example example example example example example example example

Previous | Continue

Work Safely with Silica

Create-A-Plan: Final Plan

Print Your Plan | Email Your Plan | Download PDF | Save Your Plan | Clear the Plan

Company:
Robert's Construction LLC

Person Completing the Plan/Title:
Bob the Builder

Jobsite/Project:
Bobsville

Description of Work:
example example example example example example example example

Competent or Responsible Person:
Wendy

Exposure Assessment and Controls

1

Material
Concrete

Task
Drilling/coring

Equipment and Control(s)
Drill Press with Hand-Held Drill and Vacuum (Table 1 Entry)

Task/Control Description
example example example example example example example example example

2

Material
Brick

Task
Cutting/sawing

Equipment and Control(s)
Hand-Held Masonry Saw with Water (Table 1 Entry)

Task/Control Description
example2 example2 example2 example2 example2 example2 example2 example2 example2

Safety of Others
example example example example example example example example

Worker Training
example example example example example example example example

Housekeeping
example example example example example example example example

Medical Surveillance
example example example example example example example example

Other Considerations
example example example example example example example example

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Previous Step

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