



[www.dorasmith.co.nz](http://www.dorasmith.co.nz)

### Certified Silica Removalist

#### Total Services

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Safety is everyone's responsibility. Employees and employers should work together to ensure a safe working environment and the use of safe work practices.

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*(Established - March 2000)*

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# Silica



## *“The silent killer”*

- *This is a Hazardous Substance that requires **careful management**, as it is difficult to manage the small fibres once they are dislodged into the air.*
  - *Your work place is required by law to identify and label any hazardous products and manage these in a safe way.*
  - *Exposure to silica dust may affect your health and can lead to **serious health problems**.*
  - *Recent research has found that silica is also in asbestos products, adding to the problems.*
  - *Silicosis illness is preventable.*
- Contact :**  
Dora Smith Ltd with any questions  
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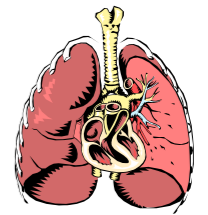
## What is Silicosis ?

- The oldest known occupational lung disease, which is irreversible, often disabling and sometimes fatal.
- Caused by the inhalation of crystalline silica dust.
- The longer and finer the fibre the greater the danger if inhaled.
- Crystalline silica is a naturally occurring mineral and commonly found in
  - ◆ sandstone
  - ◆ granite
  - ◆ slate
  - ◆ coal, and
  - ◆ pure silica sand.
- Harmful dust is invisible
- Particles can remain airborne for hours



## How does silica harm you ?

- Illness can develop after 5 years or up to 20 years later depending on the levels of exposure.
- Breathing in the silica dust may causes inflammation of the lung.
- The inflammation causes scar tissue formation on the lung.
- The scar tissue obstructs the flow of oxygen into the lungs and into the bloodstream.
- The severity of the damage will depend on the quantity of respirable dust inhaled and the frequency of exposure.
- Smoking can increase the risk of developing silica related illness.
- **Medical surveillance** is required for all personnel working with silica based products:
  - ◆ recommend 5 yearly chest x-rays
  - ◆ at least annual lung function assessments



## Who is at risk ?

- Miners
- Construction workers
- Sandblasters
- Quarry workers
- Rock drillers
- Foundry workers
- Welders
- Concrete blasters and cutters
- Brick masons
- Pottery workers
- Glass workers



## How do you protect yourself from silicosis ?

- **Do not unnecessarily disturb** possible silica products.
- Get samples analyzed to confirm if silica is present or not.
- Use the correct tools and working methods to minimise dust creation.
- Use appropriate dust control methods
- Wear approved personal protective equipment.
- Ensure dust containment during cleanup by dry vacuum (with correct filters fitted) or wet down methods and contain dust for disposal.
- Silica must be disposed of as per local body Regulations.

