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# FIGHTS THE DUST

# Silica dust in the tunnelling industry

If you work in the tunnelling industry, it is likely you are exposed to silica dust.



## What is silica dust?

Silica is a naturally occurring mineral found in the earth's crust. Silica dust is generated when silica-containing materials are cut, crushed, drilled, ground, polished, sanded, sawed or disturbed with force.

## Reducing exposure to silica dust

Following the Hierarchy of Controls is the most effective way to reduce your exposure to silica dust.

It may not always be possible to **eliminate** silica dust from your workplace. If you cannot eliminate it, you must follow control measures from the highest level of effectiveness to the lowest.



### Substitution

Use a lower energy rock breaking method.



### Isolation

Use of enclosures around transfer points (e.g., conveyors and stockpiles).



### Engineering

Localised extraction ventilation for dust during excavation.



### Administrative

Wet down blast rock and spoil before loading out.



### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Wear approved and correctly fitted respiratory protective equipment. This includes face fit testing to ensure a proper seal.



You should never rely solely on PPE to protect yourself from silica dust.