

CONSOLIDATION OF SILICA SANDBLASTING REGULATIONS

R-015-92

AS AMENDED BY

This consolidation is not an official statement of the law. It is an office consolidation prepared by the Workers' Compensation Board of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut, for convenience of reference only. The authoritative text of regulations can be ascertained from the *Revised Regulations of the Northwest Territories, 1990* and the monthly publication of Part II of the *Northwest Territories Gazette*.

The Commissioner of the Northwest Territories, under section 22 of the *Safety Act* and every enabling power, makes the *Silica Sandblasting Safety Regulations*.

1. In these regulations,

"sandblasting" means the process of projecting sand into the air using compressed air, steam or a wheel;

"silica dust" means the dust resulting from a silica process;

"silica flour" means the material produced by the milling of siliceous rocks or other substances containing diatomite;

"silica process" means the blasting, grinding, drilling, milling or engraving of any surface by sandblasting or the use of silica flour.

2. These regulations apply to every establishment.

3. An employer conducting a silica process shall ensure that no silica flour enters the air by

- (a) enclosing the work area;
- (b) maintaining ventilation and air filtering equipment in operation to remove silica flour from the air;
- (c) maintaining a jet or stream of water or other liquid on the work surface; or
- (d) a method approved by a safety officer.

4. (1) Where an employer uses ventilation and air filtering equipment, the employer shall

- (a) inspect the equipment daily and clean the equipment weekly, when in use;
- (b) ensure that no air is discharged from a ventilation system for recirculation in the workplace unless the air passes through air filtering equipment that has been approved by a safety officer; and
- (c) ensure that any air filtering system in use in the workplace is equipped with a warning device that will activate when the system is not functioning.

(2) A safety officer may designate a person in the workplace to inspect any ventilation and air filtering equipment yearly to report to the employer on the condition of the equipment and the need for repair.

(3) An employer receiving a report recommending repair under subsection (2), shall complete the recommended repairs within 30 days of receipt of the report.

5. (1) Where a safety officer determines that silica dust cannot effectively be removed from the air, an employer shall isolate workers from air containing silica dust.

(2) Where an employer is not able to comply with subsection (1), the employer shall provide each worker who may be exposed to silica dust with

- (a) respiratory equipment designed for use in silica processes and that has been approved by the Canadian Standards Association; and
- (b) dustproof coveralls, gauntlets, eye protection and headgear.

(3) An employer providing equipment under sub-section (2), shall dispose of the equipment after use or shall remove all traces of silica dust and shall store the equipment in an airtight container.

- 6.** An employer conducting a silica process shall provide the following training to any worker who is likely to come in contact with silica:
- (a) demonstration and instruction in the use of all protective equipment;
 - (b) the safe handling and proper disposal of waste silica;
 - (c) health education about the inhalation of silica and the effects of smoking;
 - (d) any other information a safety officer considers necessary.
- 7.** An employer conducting a silica process shall
- (a) clean the work area surrounding a silica process thoroughly each day by vacuum equipment or a wet cleaning method approved by a safety officer;
 - (b) ensure that no silica flour is used where a less hazardous substance may be substituted;
 - (c) ensure that any substitution made under paragraph (b) is made with the approval of a safety officer; and
 - (d) ensure that no uncombined silica is used in a silica process.
- 8.** (1) Every person conducting a sandblasting operation shall apply for registration with the Chief Safety Officer.
- (2) Each application submitted under subsection (1) shall contain
- (a) the name of the person conducting the sandblasting operation;
 - (b) the number of workers involved in the sandblasting operation;
 - (c) the location of the worksite;
 - (d) an explanation of the safety measures taken by the person with regard to the sandblasting operation; and
 - (e) a declaration signed by the person stating that subsection 4(2) and sections 5 and 7 of these regulations have been complied with.
- 9.** No person shall employ a minor where a silica process is being conducted unless
- (a) the process is conducted under constant supervision; and
 - (b) the process has been inspected and approved by a safety officer.
- 10.** (1) Within 30 days of receipt of a written request for a medical examination by a worker involved in a silica process, an employer shall arrange and pay the full cost of an examination by a physician.
- (2) The employer shall make arrangements for a medical examination that includes
- (a) a complete physical examination with special attention to the respiratory system;
 - (b) lung function tests including forced vital capacity and forced expiratory volume at one second; and
 - (c) any medical procedures considered necessary by the examining physician for the diagnosis of silica related illness.
- (3) Upon written request by the Minister, a physician who has conducted an examination under subsection (2), shall provide the Minister with a report containing all information resulting from the examination.
- (4) Every report provided under subsection (3) is a privileged communication of the person making it.