

TIPS FOR DUSTY JOBS

Mobile Equipment Operators



U.S. Department of Labor
Mine Safety and Health Administration



Loader operators and others using mobile equipment are exposed to more dust than the typical mine employee. Because so much mine dust has *silica* in it, you should take steps to protect yourself against a possible health hazard.

Silicosis can be Deadly

Some dust is stopped by the body's natural defense system, but the *smallest* dust particles can penetrate deep into the lungs. The harm from dust depends on what it's made of, what size it is, and how much and how long you breathe it. If you're exposed to enough dust with silica, you can get a disease called *silicosis*.

Silicosis can be a disabling, *even fatal*, illness that can't be reversed once a person has it. Lung tissue becomes scarred and inflexible and breathing becomes harder and harder.

If it's silica... It's not just dust.

Silicosis can't be reversed *...but it can be prevented.*

Working Smart

- Dusty haul road or loading area? Ask to have the **water truck** make a pass.
- **Compressed air is NOT for cleaning**—clothes or equipment.
- **Work upwind** of dust clouds or dusty areas when possible.

The Cab

- Use a **heater and an air conditioner** with a HEPA* filter.
- Keep doors and windows **closed** for pressurizing.
- Check that **seals** are **pliable**.
- **Clean** the cab every day.

Respirators must be...

- The **right type**, worn **right**.
- **Clean**.
- **Worn**—not hung on your neck or on top of your hat.
- The **right fit** to stop dust from getting into your lungs.
- A good fit. **Beards prevent it**.

*high efficiency particulate air