



# Clark Seif Clark Environmental Newsletter

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Every day, Clark Seif Clark professionals are deployed across the nation helping both large and small customers resolve health & safety, industrial hygiene, environmental and indoor air quality issues.

At a moment's notice, Clark Seif Clark can send their experts anywhere they are needed. No matter if it's in response to a hurricane, wildfire, flood, tornado or other natural disaster, Clark Seif Clark is ready to help and can respond in no time at all.

## General Industry and Maritime Operations Prepare for OSHA's Crystalline Silica Standard Enforcement

On June 23rd, companies and institutions categorized as maritime or general industry will be subject to enforcement of a new final rule from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to limit worker exposures to respirable crystalline silica. These enforcement actions follow the implementation of a similar final rule for construction companies that went into effect last year.

The final rule is being implemented by OSHA in an effort to curb lung cancer, silicosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and kidney disease that can occur in workers exposed to respirable crystalline silica. The agency currently believes that approximately 295,000 workers are exposed to respirable crystalline silica in over 75,000 general industry and maritime workplaces. Over 100,000 of these general industry and maritime workers are exposed to silica levels that exceed the new permissible exposure limit (PEL) reports OSHA.

The standard for general industry and maritime requires employers to:

- Measure the amount of silica that workers are exposed to if it may be at or above an action level of 25  $\hat{I}$ ¼g/m<sup>3</sup> (micrograms

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**Clark Seif Clark  
(CSC)**

[csc@csceng.com](mailto:csc@csceng.com)  
800.807.1118

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- of silica per cubic meter of air), averaged over an 8-hour day;
- Protect workers from respirable crystalline silica exposures above the permissible exposure limit of 50  $\hat{1}$ /<sub>4</sub>g/m<sup>3</sup>, averaged over an 8-hour day;
  - Limit workers' access to areas where they could be exposed above the PEL;
  - Use dust controls to protect workers from silica exposures above the PEL;
  - Provide respirators to workers when dust controls cannot limit exposures to the PEL;
  - Establish and implement a written exposure control plan that identifies tasks that involve exposure and methods used to protect workers;
  - Restrict housekeeping practices that expose workers to silica where feasible alternatives are available;
  - Offer medical exams - including chest X-rays and lung function tests - every three years for workers exposed at or above the action level for 30 or more days per year;
  - Train workers on work operations that result in silica exposure and ways to limit exposure; and
  - Keep records of workers' silica exposure and medical exams.

"Crystalline silica exposure can occur during countless tasks since it is such a common mineral found in everything from stone and concrete products to asphalt roofing materials and even items used in dental laboratories," said Zahid Iqbal, MPH, CIH and Technical Director at Clark Seif Clark. "To help companies and institutions impacted by this new final rule prepare for its implementation and upcoming enforcement, CSC's industrial hygiene professionals are available to enact and assist with compliance strategies that include air testing, monitoring, engineering controls, record keeping, personal protective equipment fit testing and employee hazard communication training."

CSC also recently sponsored an educational video about crystalline silica exposure hazards in general industry and maritime operations that can be seen here:

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## Chrysotile and Other Forms of Asbestos Still a Threat in Homes, Schools and Businesses

Throughout the United States, chrysotile is one of the most commonly found forms of asbestos. It is just one of six asbestos and asbestiform minerals that regulatory agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), recognize and regulate. In addition to chrysotile, the other regulated forms of asbestos include actinolite, amosite, anthophyllite, crocidolite and tremolite.

According to OSHA, approximately 95% of the asbestos encountered by abatement workers in the United States is chrysotile. It is also commonly referred to as white asbestos or serpentine asbestos. While some health experts consider exposure to other forms of asbestos to be more dangerous than chrysotile, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) have classified chrysotile as a known human carcinogen. The major health effects associated with exposure include lung cancer; mesothelioma, a form of cancer that is found in the thin lining of the lung, chest and the abdomen and heart; and asbestosis, a serious progressive, long-term, non-cancer disease of the lungs.

"For over a century, chrysotile and the other forms of asbestos were used extensively in thousands of building materials and manufactured goods," said Franco Seif, President of Clark Seif Clark (CSC). "While most of these products have been phased out over the past several decades, they can still be found in countless properties ranging from homes and schools to office buildings,

factories and even ships."

Working to protect families and employees from the hazards associated with asbestos exposure are the industrial hygiene and indoor environmental quality experts at CSC. Their professionals provide asbestos testing and consulting services to identify and mitigate exposure risks while helping companies adhere to asbestos regulations to avoid costly noncompliance penalties. CSC also recently sponsored an educational video about chrysotile that can be seen here:



To learn more about asbestos or other environmental, health, occupational, indoor air quality, and safety testing and consulting issues, please visit [www.csceng.com](http://www.csceng.com) , email [csc@csceng.com](mailto:csc@csceng.com) or call (800) 807-1118.

**About Clark Seif Clark:** CSC was established in 1989 to help clients in both the public and private sectors address environmental issues. CSC is a leading provider of these services with multiple offices along the western seaboard and southwest. The company believes in science-based protocols and has a strong background in engineering making them the preferred environmental consultants to healthcare facilities, architects, schools, builders, contractors, developers and real estate professionals.