### Safe Work Essentials – Working around Asbestos and Silica Standard

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To ensure suitable measures are implemented to manage risks and prevent harm when working around silica (crystalline silica) and asbestos.

The Safe Work Essentials Standard elements below, document the minimum requirements that must be in place for all works involving asbestos and silica.

### System & Procedural Requirements

* Processes are in place to ensure workplace exposure standards for asbestos and silica are not exceeded.
* The potential presence of asbestos containing material or silica is considered as part of the pre-work planning process.
* Where asbestos is identified in the workplace, the location and condition are recorded in an asbestos register that is readily accessible to affected workers.
* Where asbestos is present, the asbestos register and management plan are reviewed prior to works commencing.
* Any product identified as possibly being or containing asbestos is treated as asbestos until proven otherwise by sampling and analysis.
* Risk assessment activities for works involving asbestos consider:
	+ The type and condition of asbestos
	+ Work methods that minimise the disturbance of asbestos
	+ Atmospheric monitoring requirements
	+ Decontamination requirements
	+ Personal protective equipment requirements
	+ The disposal of waste in accordance with local government requirements
* Systems are in place to identify and document high risk silica work and the risk control measures in place.
* When assessing silica risks, assessment processes consider:
	+ Specific tasks or processes to be carried out.
	+ the form of silica.
	+ the proportion of silica in the material.
	+ Work methods such as water suppression and on tool dust or vacuum extraction to minimise the generation of dust.
	+ Atmospheric monitoring requirements and any previous results.
	+ The likely frequency and duration of exposure to crystalline silica dust.
	+ Personal protective equipment requirements
	+ Decontamination and waste disposal requirements.
	+ Any information about incidents, illnesses or diseases associated with exposure to silica dust at the workplace
* Controls implemented to manage the risks associated with asbestos and silica are selected in accordance with hierarchy of controls.
* Work areas are secured to prevent unauthorised access.

### Plant & Equipment Requirements

* Preventing the disturbance of asbestos and the generation of silica dust is considered when selecting the appropriate tools and equipment for tasks.
* Personal protective equipment and/or respiratory protective equipment is selected, used and maintained in accordance with relevant standards.
* Air monitoring equipment is calibrated and maintained to approved standards.

### People Requirements

* Workers at risk of being exposed to asbestos or silica receive training on the associated risks, potential health effects and control measures.
* Workers are competent and hold relevant licences for work activities.
* Asbestos removal works is carried out by an approved and licenced contractor.
* Where there is a health risk for those exposed to asbestos or silica, health surveillance processes are in place.