



# Safety Tip of the Week

## Concrete Construction Safety

Inhalation of cement dust may occur when workers empty bags of dry cement material to make concrete, cut concrete work tiles, and use jackhammers to break up a sidewalk or road during repairs.

This exposure can cause nose and throat irritation. Long-term exposure to concrete dust containing crystalline silica can lead to the disabling lung disease silicosis.

However, breathing problems are just one concern. If cement dust or wet concrete comes in contact with the skin, burns, rashes, and skin irritations can develop.

Also, should dust from concrete or cement get in the eyes, immediate or delayed reactions may occur, ranging from redness to painful chemical burns.



### To Reduce the Chance of Breathing in Cement Dust:

- Wet down the work area to keep dust out of the air and use wet cutting methods rather than dry cut masonry products;
- Use engineering control methods such as vacuums to pull the dust out of the air;
- If dust can't be avoided, wear the appropriate respiratory protection, which must be approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Respirators also must be provided upon request;
- Mix dry cement in well-ventilated areas; and
- Remember to wash your hands and face before eating, drinking, or using the restroom. If wet or dry concrete gets on your skin, wash it off as soon as possible.

***EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED...AND ALWAYS BE PROTECTED!!***