

Silica Rules - How Does This Affect Your Business and How Can AB Products Help?

OSHA's Respirable Crystalline Silica Standard for Construction has changed construction practices. Common questions we receive include: What is the Silica Rule? How may I meet the requirements? To help answer those questions, we have created this tech sheet for your use.

What is the Silica Rule?

Quite simply the Silica Rule, properly identified as the Respirable Crystalline Silica Standard for Construction has been created by OSHA to protect individuals who may encounter a product known as crystalline silica. Crystalline silica is a common component in items such as concrete, brick and stone. When these types of materials are cut, they release small particles including this silica. Studies show that when inhaled, crystalline silica is linked to certain lung diseases and so the standard was created to greatly reduce exposure and increase long-term health of those associated with the construction industry.



How may I meet the requirements?

There are multiple ways to comply with the standard, but most importantly employers are required to limit exposure by each employee and to take steps to protect them as well. There are generally two paths to ensure compliance:

1. Create a company owned plan by measuring workers exposure to crystalline silica based on the type of equipment used and the time spent running it. In addition, the employer will need to independently determine the controls that will work best to limit silica exposure to keep it under the PEL (permissible exposure limit).
2. Follow a standard control method laid out in Table 1 of the construction standard by OSHA. This may be the easiest method since it tells each employer what must be done for eighteen different pieces of construction equipment associated with the Silica Rule.



Either path an employer chooses will result in the establishment and implementation of a written plan that identifies what will be done to limit exposure and protect workers. In addition, each employer must:

- Have a competent employee to enforce the written plan
- Restrict common practices that expose employees to silica
- Offer medical exams every three years to employees who wear a respirator for 30 or more days per year
- Keep records of employee's exposure and exams
- Educate staff on negative effects of silica exposure

Doing nothing no longer works. Avoid endangering employees and even paying heavy fines for non-compliance by creating your plan now. Information on the standards, including most of the information within this tech sheet may be found by reviewing OSHA's Respirable Crystalline Silica Standard for Construction Fact Sheet.

What is Allan Block doing to help?

The old motto, "work smarter, not harder" has never been truer as we look for ways to reduce the number of times a saw needs to be started up on a job site. Reasons for this are plentiful and certainly include cost and now also the Respirable Crystalline Silica Standard for Construction. We at Allan Block are dedicated to helping find the right product for your job while supporting efforts to reduce unnecessary cutting of concrete material. So how can you use AB products to help with your planning?

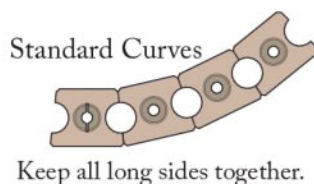
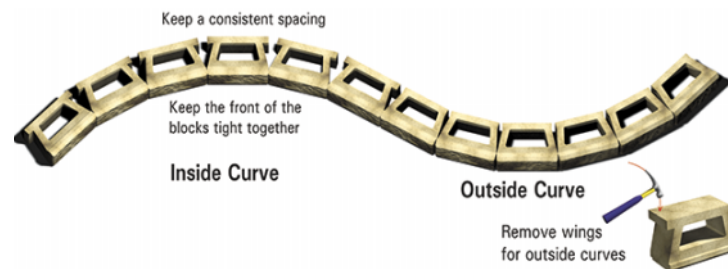
AB Retaining Walls:

Making fluid curves has never been easier than when using AB Retaining Wall products. By simply using a hammer (not a saw) and knocking the rear wings off for outside curves and doing nothing for inside curves will provide you with the look so many are searching for.

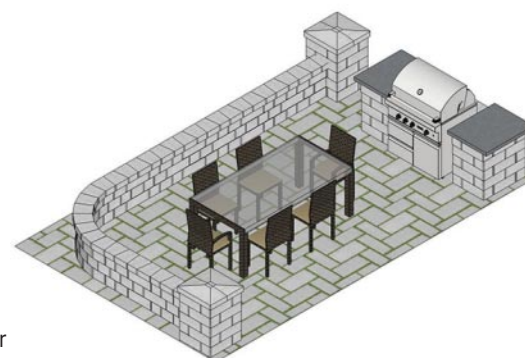
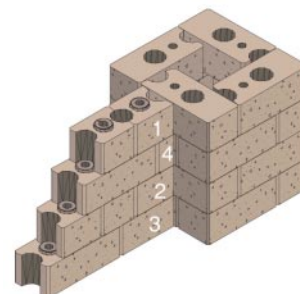
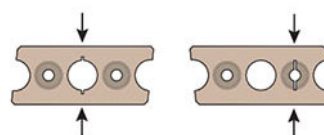
AB Courtyard Walls:

Make straight or curved seating walls with a product that is specifically meant to reduce cutting time. What are some ways you can use AB Courtyard to reduce cuts?

1. Make a full circle for fire pits by simply stacking the trapezoid shaped AB York block with the long sides all facing out.
2. Make quick turns in seating walls by using the same AB York mentioned above and transitioning out into straight or serpentine wall sections.
3. Use the pre-scored AB York and AB Dublin blocks to determine where splits need to be made to build vertical ends to come off a column (or other vertical structures such as the side of a house).
4. Use a guillotine splitter to snap the block in the appropriate spot to make anything you desire in your backyard or commercial courtyard space.
 - a. A hammer and masonry chisel will also allow you to create these pieces.
5. Use a pre-designed Courtyard Patio Package to create stunning outdoor rooms that are laid out to reduce time spent cutting product.



Modify blocks by cutting in 1/2 or a 3/4 & 1/4 length.



AB Fence: AB Fence is a perfect solution for residential and commercial sites when you need privacy or sound abatement. When designed and installed properly, this product will be constructed without cutting any of the vertical wall material (some caps may need to be cut). Proper planning with Allan Block's construction jigs allows for post spacing to be laid out to accommodate the exact dimension of the panel blocks resulting in no cuts. It is a wonderful solution for a variety of reasons including the reduction in silica dust from your future job site.



No matter the need you have, we are dedicated to helping you find the right solution with the most efficient product. Reducing silica is not only the standard, it will create a safer and simpler job site.

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The information shown here is for use with Allan Block products only.

