

M505: CONTROL OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

Case Study 3 – Portable Equipment

You have been called to a construction site as the result of complaints from workers regarding dust generated during the cutting or shaping of concrete slabs or tiles.

You make an inspection of the site with the following outcomes:

- Hand-held cut-off saws used on the site to cut the concrete products are powered either by small capacity combustion engines, electricity or compressed air.
- The cutting action generates high levels of respirable dust (Photographs 1 – 4) which, upon analysis, is found to contain high levels of respirable crystalline silica.
- Management and worker focus is on productivity, driven in the most part by a lucrative bonus scheme.
- The only control measure in use is respiratory protective equipment.



Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photograph 3



Photograph 4

EXERCISE:

Given the above situation, what actions would you recommend be adopted to minimise worker exposure to respirable crystalline silica?

In your answer consider which strategies would be the most practical and thus the most likely to be adopted by management and the workers.