



NB: When applying this information, Masons should consider any matter to which the information relates according to the circumstances of their particular case.

**The Master Brick & Blocklayers issues the following statement:**

“The dry cutting of brick and block products poses workers with a serious health and safety risk due to the release of crystalline silica. Exposure to crystalline silica can result in serious health issues including silicosis, a serious and incurable respiratory disease, and cancers. Masons should take all reasonable steps to prevent workers from exposure to crystalline silica.”

Ways to reduce the risk of exposure to crystalline silica when cutting clay and / or concrete brick and block face work.

1. Familiarise yourself with any manufacturer’s instructions (i.e. Safety Data Sheets).
2. Ensure that ALL workers on site are aware that cutting of concrete and/or clay products will occur and assess then plan with them any actions they may need to take.

NB: No person(s) without PPE gear should be allowed to enter an area where dust from cutting bricks and/or blocks is visible.

3. Ensure that you are using cutting equipment that either dampens or extracts any residual dust.
4. Ensure that the worker carrying out the cutting work is wearing appropriate PPE gear and has been trained in wearing, handling and storing it (P2 respirator, safety glasses and hearing protection)..
5. Ensure workers have access to handwashing areas and are reminded to wash face and hands after cutting and prior to eating (or any behaviour that can lead to dust transference such as smoking, biting nails etc.)
6. Ensure that workers have a process for the safe disposal of dust from cutting. Ideally cutting equipment will have a dust collection system. Workers should be trained in the manufacturer’s instructions relating to emptying dust collection systems.

NB: DO NOT dry sweep dust from cutting.

7. Ensure workers take precautions to not transfer dust from outer clothing to work or personal vehicles when leaving the site. Any work clothes with dust present should be washed seperately from general clothing.

If you are struggling to keep up to date, or with meeting your health and safety requirements, we recommend joining the Master Brick & Blocklayers Association

[www.masterbrickandblock.co.nz](http://www.masterbrickandblock.co.nz)