

Chapter 3

Getting Organized

⇒ ⇒ ⇒ GENERAL COMMENTS FOR INSTRUCTORS:

This chapter prepares companies and workers for organizing their silica elimination or control programs. Workers need to understand why silica sand is a problem (see Chapter 2.)

Companies should put one person in charge of health and safety programs. For small companies that person is generally the owner, manager or foreman of the blasting shop. Every employee should know who is in charge of health and safety.

The benefits of starting a Health and Safety Committee should be discussed.

⇒ ⇒ ⇒ AUDIO VISUAL AIDS:

➤ Overhead slides throughout the chapter.

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⇒ ⇒ ⇒ **IF YOUR SHOP USES SILICA SAND, YOU SHOULD:**

⇒ **Understand why silica is a problem.**

For you to prevent silica exposure and silicosis and comply with MIOSHA regulations, you must be well educated. This manual is an excellent place to begin.

⇒ **Put one person in charge.**

Usually, abrasive blasting shop owners handle employee safety and health by themselves. A manager, foreman, or employee could be assigned to manage health and safety programs. Whoever the choice, make sure that all your coworkers know who is responsible for safety.

⇒ **Develop a Health and Safety (H&S) Committee.**

The main reason for developing a H&S Committee is to encourage and heighten involvement in your safety program. Safety is a part of your operation - everyone in the company has a role in safety. H&S Committees have been an integral part of successful safety programs for quite a while. Sometimes, business owners and managers are resistant to giving up what they perceive as control over their business and employees. But, if run properly, an H&S Committee will have a positive effect on employee morale and the bottom line. See “About H&S Committees” below.

⇒ **Get any related records in one place.**

If your shop has ever taken actions to prevent silica exposure and silicosis, find any records that were filed. Begin filing all records dealing with silica and silicosis together. As you progress through the steps outlined in this manual, you will build a more complete record of your program.

ALL COMPANIES USING SILICA SAND SHOULD READ THIS CHAPTER.
READ IT BEFORE CONTINUING TO OTHER CHAPTERS.

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⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ABOUT H&S COMMITTEES.

Employee input is a critical part of a successful safety program. An H&S Committee is one way to obtain that input. The level of involvement by employees and degree of management commitment will determine if an H&S Committee is successful.

⇒ ⇒ ⇒ Consider the pros and cons of setting up a H&S committee:

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Can help you identify safety and health concerns that coworkers consider most critical. ➔ Can help you find creative solutions. ➔ Can help you show a good faith effort toward health and safety regulations. ➔ Can boost coworker loyalty, morale and enthusiasm by getting involved in an issue that's important to everyone. ➔ If new general shop rules are needed, a committee can help make sure employees accept and follow them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➔ Committee members will sacrifice some regular scheduled work time. ➔ Committee can become a “gripe” meeting

⇒ ⇒ ⇒ How Do I Set Up A H&S Committee?

⇒ Prior to forming the H&S Committee, management should:

- ⇒ define the H&S Committee's Mission Statement,
- ⇒ define the role/function of the Committee,
- ⇒ determine the meeting schedule
- ⇒ determine the length of the meeting

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⇒ The Mission Statement

The mission statement should describe the H&S Committee's intended role. It may also set general goals, objectives or guidelines. This helps to keep the Committee on track.

⇒ Sample Mission Statement

The mission of the (*Company Name*) Health and Safety (H&S) Committee will be to provide leadership in safety and work toward the elimination of workplace injuries and illnesses. The H&S Committee will work to:

1. Assist the company to identify, evaluate and resolve workplace health and safety concerns.
2. Assist in developing and distributing health and safety policies and procedures.
3. Conduct periodic surveys and inspections to identify hazards and recommend corrective actions.
4. Consider recommendations or suggestions concerning health and safety issues.
5. Help to identify employee training needs.

⇒ H&S Committee Membership

The person selected to be in charge of health and safety would be a good selection to be the first H&S Committee chairperson. In close association with management (if applicable), the number of Committee members should be determined. The best people to have as Committee members are interested in safety issues and have direct knowledge of the company's operations. H&S Committees work best if there are representatives from both management and employees.

At the first H&S Committee, establish procedures about how to get things done, such as how the meeting agenda will be determined, how the meeting minutes are kept, and how information will be distributed to company employees.

⇒ ⇒ ⇒ What Could a H&S Committee do regarding Abrasive Blasting?

- ⇒ Decide which areas and jobs are hazardous.
- ⇒ Identify all the places silica sand is used and stored.
- ⇒ Make a list of the actions needed to fix each hazard. Suggestions from Committee members and other employees should be encouraged.

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⇒ ⇒ ⇒ **What Could a H&S Committee do regarding Abrasive Blasting? (continued)**

- ⇒ Monitor your progress toward abating each hazard at your Committee meetings, making sure your changes work as planned.
- ⇒ Committee members should provide feedback about whether coworkers understand what the silica control plan and health and safety program is about and why it's important.
- ⇒ After the original goals have been accomplished, review the company's silica health and safety program and determine whether it has been effective.

⇒ ⇒ ⇒ **H&S COMMITTEE DO'S AND DON'TS**

DO	DON'T
Keep the discussion centered on the issue involved. Be specific about the problem and its suggested correction.	Deal in generalities.
Keep personalities from becoming involved.	Allow the meetings to become gripe sessions.
Meet on a regular basis. Hold all meetings as scheduled. Cancel meetings only in an emergency. Be prompt in attending meetings.	Start scheduled meetings late, or drag them beyond the allotted time.
Submit the agenda in advance to allow sufficient time to investigate problems. Identify all items to be discussed. Each item deserves thorough investigation and discussion.	Treat any issue on the agenda as unimportant. Anticipate that you know the answer to a question before it has been discussed.
Get accustomed to problem-solving techniques by tackling minor problems first.	Start the first meeting with extremely difficult issues.
Maintain an agreed-to procedure on recording and drafting the minutes, as well as the methods of distribution.	Delay in communicating solutions developed or the outcome of issues discussed.
Maintain accurate minutes on subjects discussed at the previous meetings that have been "completed" or "resolved" as well as those items still "open."	Look for immediate results.

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⇒⇒⇒ **MIOSHA Consultation Education and Training (CET) Division:** The MIOSHA Consultation Education and Training (CET) Division offers many services to both public and private sector employers in Michigan. Employers in the private sector (manufacturing and construction) may request a voluntary MIOSHA inspection of their workplace (full or partial) without the attachment of fines or penalties. These on-site consultations are conducted by occupational safety consultants or industrial hygienists in the CET onsite consultation section. Employers must agree, prior to the start of this inspection, to correct all serious violations found during the voluntary inspection. Currently, priority for participation in this program is given to manufacturing and construction employers with less than 250 employees. Other requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The CET Division, upon employer request, will also conduct a non-enforcement hazard survey of an employer's site (full or partial). The hazard survey is a training tool which affords the employer and selected employees the opportunity to learn how to identify unsafe or unhealthy acts or conditions, and MIOSHA violations. The hazard survey results in formulating ways to correct any noted deficiencies. For free help in establishing or improving your safety program, contact:

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Notes