



SILICA SAFETY INFORMATION SHEET

Wilsonart® Quartz Fabrication

Purpose

This document is provided to help fabricators understand the health hazards associated with respirable crystalline silica and the recommended controls for reducing employee exposure during fabrication of Wilsonart® Quartz products.

What is the Hazard?

Wilsonart® Quartz contains crystalline silica. During fabrication activities such as cutting, grinding, routing, drilling, polishing, and finishing, respirable crystalline silica dust may be generated. Inhalation of respirable crystalline silica can result in serious and potentially irreversible health effects.[1][2][3]

Potential Health Risks

Exposure to respirable crystalline silica has been associated with:

- Silicosis
- Lung cancer
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Kidney disease
- Respiratory irritation and reduced lung function
- Other silica-related illnesses[2][3]

Wilsonart Safety Requirements

Wilsonart's Fabrication and Installation Guidelines state:

- Wet fabrication processes must be used when cutting, routing, and finishing Wilsonart® Quartz.[1]
- Tools should be used with wet fabrication processes at all times.[1]
- Fabricators should wear approved respiratory protection and follow applicable ventilation requirements.[1]
- Wilsonart® Quartz dust contains silica, which can be hazardous when inhaled.[1]

Recommended Exposure Controls

The following controls are recommended by Wilsonart, OSHA, and NIOSH to reduce employee exposure to respirable crystalline silica:

1. Wet Fabrication

Use water-fed equipment and wet-cutting methods during cutting, drilling, routing, grinding, polishing, and finishing operations.[1][2][3]

2. Ventilation and Dust Collection

Use engineering controls such as local exhaust ventilation and dust collection systems designed to capture respirable dust at the source.[2][3]

3. Housekeeping

Do not use dry sweeping or compressed air to clean silica-containing dust. Use wet cleanup methods or HEPA-filtered vacuum systems.[2][3]

4. Respiratory Protection

Where required by applicable regulations or exposure conditions, provide NIOSH-approved respiratory protection and maintain a written respiratory protection program.[2]

5. Employee Training

Train employees regarding:

- Silica hazards
- Safe work practices
- Proper use of equipment
- Respiratory protection requirements
- Housekeeping procedures
- Recognition of silica-related health symptoms[2][3]

6. Exposure Assessment

Assess employee exposure levels as required by applicable OSHA standards and maintain documentation supporting compliance.[2]

Aetna Building Solutions Purchasing Requirement

As part of our commitment to responsible product stewardship, Aetna Building Solutions requires customers purchasing Wilsonart® Quartz products to acknowledge the hazards associated with respirable crystalline silica and confirm that wet fabrication equipment is utilized within their fabrication operations.

Disclaimer

This document is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended to serve as legal, regulatory, medical, industrial hygiene, or workplace safety advice.

Customers are solely responsible for compliance with all applicable federal, state, provincial, and local regulations; OSHA requirements; Wilsonart product documentation; Safety Data Sheets; equipment manufacturer instructions; and current industry best practices.

Requirements, regulations, guidance documents, and best practices may change over time. Customers should regularly review current source materials and consult qualified safety professionals to ensure ongoing compliance.

REFERENCES

[1] Wilsonart® Quartz Fabrication and Installation Guidelines, Revision 2025. Wilsonart states that quartz dust contains silica that can be hazardous when inhaled and that wet fabrication processes must be used when cutting, routing, and finishing Wilsonart Quartz.

[2] Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Crystalline Silica Safety and Health Topics: <https://www.osha.gov/silica-crystalline>

[3] National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), Worker Exposure to Silica During Countertop Manufacturing, Finishing and Installation: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2026-101/>