

## A journey to competence

Across all industries 30,000 people suffered from work-related breathing or lung problems in 2010/2011\*

\*Source: HSE

- Construction accounts for about 5% of employees in the UK but also for 27% of UK fatal accidents
- In 2011/12 there were 49 fatalities in construction
- In 2010/11 there were 50 fatalities, 4,000 serious injuries and 2.3 million working days lost in construction
- In 2010/11 there were 5,000 new cases of cancer in construction
- Around 8,000 people a year die from asbestos-related disease and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD).

### Competence is skills, knowledge AND behaviour

Most accidents are caused by people and competence can be improved with a little more thought in three areas:

- **Self-awareness:** where operatives consider themselves and their personal role in the process
- **Situational awareness:** where the unexpected is considered, for example, when working in unfamiliar surroundings
- **Risk awareness:** which requires a broader appreciation of risk beyond standard assessment.

Source: HSE

## Dust control top ten tips

Call: 0845 600 4569  
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Dust causes thousands of deaths and serious illness every year. Here are the top ten tips to control exposure:

1. If dust creation is likely, conduct a risk assessment. Think – avoid, prevent, minimise
2. Use tools with extraction systems to extract dust at source
3. Use water suppression equipment to stop dust becoming airborne
4. Temporary polythene sheet systems can contain the spread of dust
5. Avoid creating dust in enclosed spaces which can increase risk
6. Use the correct PPE and ensure it fits properly
7. Don't sweep-up. This releases dust into the air. Use an application Class (H) or (M) filter dust extractor unit
8. The most dangerous dust is invisible. Use dust monitoring equipment
9. PPE is important but it is your last line of defence
10. You have a duty of care to protect yourself and others. Look after your mates.

## What is dust?

By dust we mean all 'airborne particles'. This includes wood, stone, sand, concrete, asbestos fibres, mould spores, welding fumes and diesel exhausts. Also vapours from general solvents and from spraying two-pack paints containing isocyanates.

All dusts are potentially dangerous but some are particularly risky.

1. **Asbestos fibres** – these are particularly dangerous and require specific training and specialist control
2. **Stone dust (silica)** – includes concrete blocks, kerbs, slabs, sand, gravel and cement
3. **Wood dust** – includes soft and hard wood, fibreboards, chipboard and MDF.



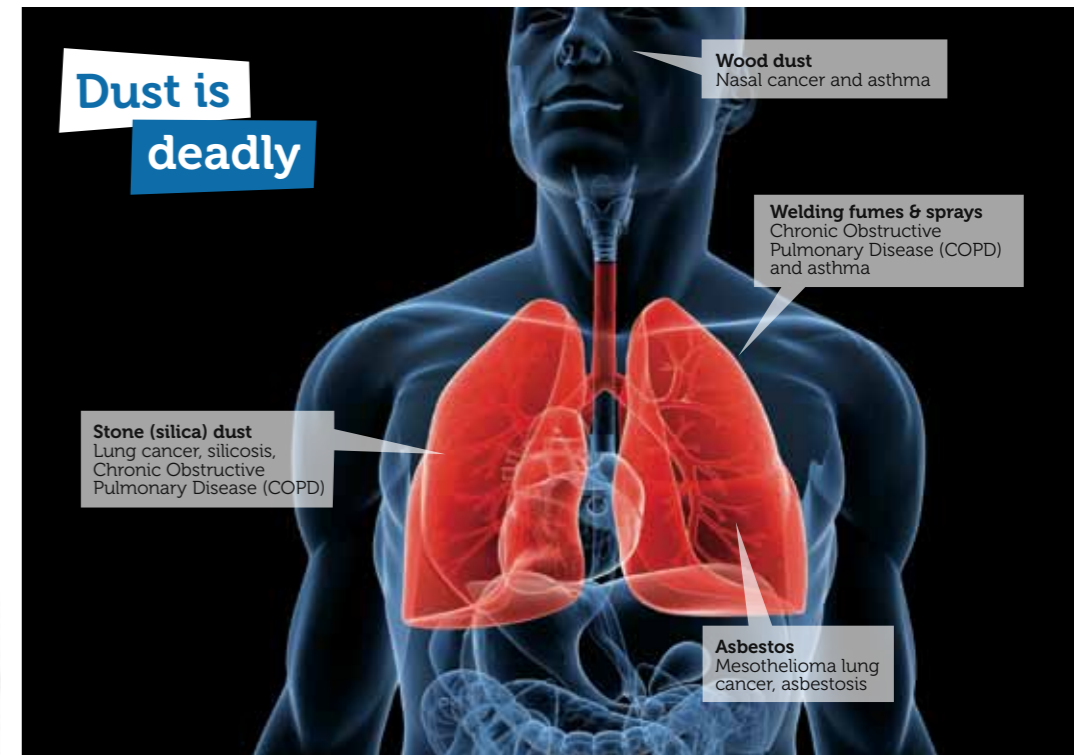
## Dust is deadly

**Stone (silica) dust**  
Lung cancer, silicosis,  
Chronic Obstructive  
Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

**Wood dust**  
Nasal cancer and asthma

**Welding fumes & sprays**  
Chronic Obstructive  
Pulmonary Disease (COPD)  
and asthma

**Asbestos**  
Mesothelioma lung  
cancer, asbestosis



# Three-stage risk assessment

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Risk assessment is a legal requirement and the HSE suggests a three-stage approach: **AVOID, PREVENT and MINIMISE.**

## 1. Avoid

Establish whether you can carry out the task in a way that does not create dust.



1. Block splitter



2. Cordless nail gun



3. Magnum shears



4. 110v Pipe jointing tool

# Three-stage risk assessment

## 2. Prevent

If you can't avoid dust creation, you must do everything practically possible to prevent exposure with adequate control measures. Use tools with dust extraction equipment that remove dust at source and/or dust suppression systems.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

1. Dust extractor unit 2. 110v wallchasing machine 3. Diamond grinder 4. Welding fumes extractor  
 5. Wheeled poly trolley 6. Diamond drilling rig 7. Heavy-duty masonry saw 8. Floor saw

# Three-stage risk assessment

## 3. Minimise

If you cannot prevent exposure, you must reduce it to as low a level as is reasonably practical.



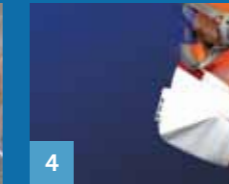
1. Air cube



2. Washer bowser



3. Zip wall



4. PPE

There are an estimated 40,000 new cases of work-related skin disease a year\*  
\*Source: HSE



**Dust control**  
 Pocket guide