



Risk assessment and method statement

Dust risk assessment

Dust-producing work: silica, wood and other dust. Pre-filled with typical hazards, controls and sequence: edit it for this site.

PROJECT

SITE ADDRESS			
ACTIVITY		RAMS REFERENCE	
Dust-producing work: silica, wood and other dust			
CONTRACTOR CARRYING OUT THE WORK		PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR	
PREPARED BY	APPROVED BY	REVISION	DATE

Revision record

Reissue and rebrief when the sequence, the programme, the team or the conditions change. If you would have written it differently had you known, it needs a new revision.

REV	DATE	WHAT CHANGED	BY

THE WORK

The activity, the place and the people

Pre-filled for this kind of work. Make every line specific to this site: this sequence, this access, these people, this weather.

Scope of the activity

What is being done, and what is not included.

MHSWR REGULATION 3(1)

Cutting, chasing, drilling, coring, breaking, sanding and clean-up that produce silica, wood or other dust on [site or job]. Materials: [list, for example concrete block, kerbs, roof tiles, MDF, plasterboard]. Each task and its controls are listed on the dust control page. Not included: [exclusions, for example asbestos-containing materials, covered by a separate plan].

Location and access

Where on site, how people and materials get there, and the restrictions.

Site access via [gate]. Cutting station at [location] with water supply, extraction and boarded surface. Indoor dusty work at [areas], screened off and signed. Extraction units and RPE stored at [location]. Working hours [08:00 to 17:00].

Programme and interfaces

When the work runs, and who else is working nearby.

CDM REGULATION 15(2)

START DATE

DURATION

WORKING HOURS

INTERFACES WITH OTHER TRADES

Other trades and occupants near dusty work: [names]. Dusty tasks programmed for when areas are clear; screens and sheeting kept in place until clean-up is finished. Air handling units near the work isolated or protected by [name].

Documents this RAMS relies on

Dust control page in this document; HSE CIS36 and CIS69; COSHH assessment [ref]; extraction TExT records [ref]; face-fit test records; health surveillance arrangements; construction phase plan.

The team, and their competence

CDM REGULATION 8

ROLE	NAME	CARD, TICKET OR TRAINING NEEDED	CONTACT
Assessor		Knows the tasks, the materials and the HSE task controls in CIS36, and gets help with exposure monitoring where needed.	
Supervisor		Checks extraction, water and RPE before and during each dusty task, and stops work when a control fails.	
Operatives		Trained in the dust risks, how to use and check the controls, and how to wear and look after their RPE.	
Fit tester		Trained, qualified and experienced; HSE names the Fit2Fit scheme as one way to show competence.	
Extraction examiner		Competent to carry out the thorough examination and test of on-tool extraction.	
Occupational health		A doctor or nurse competent in lung health surveillance for silica and wood dust.	

PROJECT	DOCUMENT Dust risk assessment	REVISION	DATE	PAGE 2 of 9
---------	----------------------------------	----------	------	----------------

METHOD STATEMENT

The sequence of work

The order the team will work in on the day, with the controls built into each stage. If the sequence changes on site, revise the RAMS and brief it again.

STAGE	WHAT IS DONE, AND HOW	CONTROLS AT THIS STAGE	BY
Plan out the dust	Go through the drawings and the programme for cutting, chasing, drilling and breaking. Order materials to size, ask for pre-cut and pre-finished items, and choose fixings and routes that avoid chasing.	Each design decision recorded; dusty tasks that remain listed for assessment.	Contracts manager
Assess each task	For each dusty task, record the material, the tool, the work area, how long it lasts and how often. Note the WEL that applies and who else could be exposed.	Task table completed before work starts, under COSHH regulation 6.	Assessor
Choose the controls	Set water suppression or on-tool extraction for every task that makes high dust levels, then the RPE to go with it. Plan screens, sheeting and ventilation for indoor work.	Controls taken from HSE CIS36 for each task, or justified where different.	Assessor
Check the equipment	Check each extraction unit is H or M class, matched to the tool, with its low-flow indicator working and TExT in date. Check water bottles and feeds.	TExT within 14 months, or hire firm confirmation; weekly check sheet started.	Supervisor
Fit and issue RPE	Issue RPE with an APF of at least 20, of the model each wearer was face-fit tested on. Provide powered hoods for long work and for anyone with facial hair.	Fit test records held; clean-shaven rule briefed; spare masks and filters on site.	Supervisor
Brief the team	Brief the dusty tasks, the controls for each, how to check the extraction and water, how to wear the RPE, and what to do if a control fails.	Briefing signed against this revision before the work starts.	Supervisor
Set up the work area	Screen or sheet off the area, put up signs, and keep other people out. Set up the cutting station with water, extraction and protection for the surface.	Area closed off before the first cut; only the people doing the work inside.	Operatives
Do the work	Use the tool with the hood close to the surface and water flowing for the whole cut. Stop if the low-flow warning shows, the water runs out or dust is visible in the air.	Supervisor checks during the task that controls are in use and working.	Operatives
Clean up	Damp down and clear larger debris with a shovel and bucket, then vacuum fine dust with an H or M class unit. Seal extractor bags and put them in the waste container.	No dry sweeping and no compressed air; RPE worn during clean-up.	Operatives
Health checks and review	Enrol regularly exposed operatives in health surveillance. Review the assessment when tasks, materials or tools change, when monitoring or health checks show a problem, and at set intervals.	Review dated and signed; health records kept for 40 years.	Contracts manager

CDM REGULATION 15(2): PLAN, MANAGE AND MONITOR THE WORK

PROJECT	DOCUMENT Dust risk assessment	REVISION	DATE	PAGE 3 of 9
---------	----------------------------------	----------	------	----------------

RISK ASSESSMENT

Hazards, controls and the risk that remains

Each significant hazard rated before and after its controls, as likelihood times severity. The ratings are typical: check them for this site.

	LIKELIHOOD		SEVERITY		
	1	2	3	4	5
5	5	10	15	20	25
4	4	8	12	16	20
3	3	6	9	12	15
2	2	4	6	8	10
1	1	2	3	4	5

1 to 4 low 5 to 12 medium 15 to 25 high

HAZARD	WHO COULD BE HARMED, AND HOW	RISK BEFORE	CONTROLS	RISK AFTER	BY
Cutting blocks, kerbs and paving	Operatives using cut-off saws on concrete and stone, and anyone in the dust cloud nearby.	5 x 5 = 25 High	- Cuts limited at layout stage, materials cut off site, or a block splitter used in place of a saw. - Water suppression on the saw, with enough water at the blade for the whole cut. Wetting the material first does not work. - RPE with an APF of 20, such as an FFP3 mask, face-fit tested; others kept out of the cutting area.	2 x 5 = 10 Med	Supervisor
Chasing walls and raking out mortar	Electricians, plumbers and bricklayers chasing or raking out masonry, often indoors.	5 x 5 = 25 High	- Chasing designed out where possible, for example by surface-run or over-covered cables. - On-tool extraction to an H or M class unit, with the hood close to the wall. - RPE with an APF of 20; powered RPE considered where the work runs for more than an hour without a break.	2 x 5 = 10 Med	
Drilling and coring concrete and masonry	Fixers and services trades drilling holes or coring openings, often overhead or in enclosed rooms.	4 x 4 = 16 High	- Number of holes cut at the design stage; direct fastening or screws where they do the job. - For small holes, a dust collector or cordless extraction on the drill; for main-activity drilling and dry coring, an H or M class unit. - Wet coring where practicable; RPE with an APF of 20 for main-activity drilling and longer coring.	2 x 4 = 8 Med	
Breaking out in enclosed spaces	Operatives using hand-held breakers in rooms, basements and plant areas with limited ventilation.	4 x 5 = 20 High	- Bursting, crushing, sawing or remote-controlled demolition used in place of hand breaking where possible. - On-tool extraction to an H or M class unit, with general mechanical ventilation in enclosed rooms. - RPE with an APF of 20 and the number of people in the room kept to those doing the work.	2 x 5 = 10 Med	
Scabbling and grinding concrete	Operatives preparing or removing concrete surfaces with hand-held scabblers and grinders.	4 x 5 = 20 High	- Finishes specified that do not need scabbling, or water jetting and retarders used instead. - On-tool extraction to an H or M class unit wherever the tool allows. - RPE with an APF of 20, with powered RPE considered for longer runs.	2 x 5 = 10 Med	
Cutting roof tiles and slates	Roofers cutting concrete and clay tiles with cut-off saws at height.	4 x 5 = 20 High	- Natural and fibre cement slates cut by hand; half and tile-and-a-half units and correct setting out to cut fewer tiles. - Water suppression in a dedicated cutting area protected with scaffold boards. - RPE with an APF of 20 for anyone cutting.	2 x 5 = 10 Med	
Engineered stone worktops	Worktop fitters cutting and finishing resin-based stone, which can hold very high levels of silica.	4 x 5 = 20 High	- Cutting, shaping and polishing done by the fabricator off site, with only minor adjustment on site. - Any site cutting done wet or with on-tool extraction to an H or M class unit, never dry and unextracted. - RPE with an APF of at least 20; HSE G404 says health surveillance must be considered for worktop installers.	2 x 5 = 10 Med	Contracts manager
Cutting and sanding wood and MDF	Joiners, carpenters and shopfitters using saws, routers and sanders, mostly indoors.	4 x 4 = 16 High	- Pre-cut and pre-finished materials ordered; a dedicated cutting area set up to contain the dust. - On-tool extraction to an H or M class unit, at the flow rate the tool needs. - RPE with an APF of 20 for sanding and for cutting beyond about 15 to 30 minutes of trigger time a day.	2 x 4 = 8 Med	

MHSWR REGULATION 3(6): WITH FIVE OR MORE EMPLOYEES, RECORD THE SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS

PROJECT	DOCUMENT Dust risk assessment	REVISION	DATE	PAGE 4 of 9
---------	----------------------------------	----------	------	----------------

RISK ASSESSMENT, CONTINUED

More hazards, and those specific to this site

HAZARD	WHO COULD BE HARMED, AND HOW	RISK BEFORE	CONTROLS	RISK AFTER	BY
Sanding plasterboard joints	Tapers and dryliners sanding jointing compound, often for long periods.	3 x 3 = 9 Med	- Tapered-edge boards and finishes chosen that need less sanding. - Extracted sanders on an H, M or L class unit; L class is suitable only for lower toxicity dust such as gypsum. - RPE where extraction alone does not keep the dust down, with the room ventilated.	2 x 3 = 6 Med	
Dry sweeping and clean-up	Labourers clearing rubble, dust and debris, and anyone working nearby.	4 x 4 = 16 High	- Small amounts damped down, then cleared with a brush, shovel and bucket. - Fine dust vacuumed with an H or M class unit; no dry sweeping and no compressed air lines. - Covered chutes and skips; RPE with an APF of 20 depending on the location, time and material.	2 x 4 = 8 Med	
Dust spreading to others	Other trades, occupants and the public near dusty work, who have no RPE.	3 x 4 = 12 Med	- Dusty work sheeted or screened off, with doors and openings sealed. - Work timed for when the area is clear, and the number of people near the work kept down. - General mechanical ventilation in enclosed areas, drawing air away from others.	2 x 4 = 8 Med	Site manager
Extraction not doing its job	Operatives relying on on-tool extraction with a blocked filter, split hose or wrong unit.	3 x 5 = 15 High	- Pre-use check of hood, hose and low-flow indicator; hose fitted with an adaptor, not tape. - Formal maintenance check at least weekly, and a thorough examination and test at least every 14 months, or proof from the hire firm. - Work stopped if the low-flow warning shows or dust escapes.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	Supervisor
Emptying extractors and changing filters	Operatives emptying units or changing filters, who can be exposed to the collected dust.	3 x 4 = 12 Med	- Units fitted with the maker's disposable bags, sealed and placed in the waste container, never emptied for reuse. - Filters changed as the maker directs, with RPE worn while doing it. - Units wiped down daily so dust does not build up on working parts.	2 x 4 = 8 Med	
RPE that does not protect	Wearers with the wrong mask, a poor seal, stubble or a mask worn for too long.	3 x 5 = 15 High	- Tight-fitting masks face-fit tested for each wearer on each make, model and size, and wearers clean-shaven where it seals. - Loose-fitting powered hoods for anyone who cannot be clean-shaven, and for long or hot work. - Disposable masks replaced as the maker recommends; reusable RPE cleaned, stored and examined at suitable intervals.	1 x 5 = 5 Med	
Dust carried on clothing	Operatives and their families, when dust is carried into welfare, vans and homes.	3 x 3 = 9 Med	- Work clothing chosen that does not hold dust, or disposable coveralls for the dustiest tasks. - Clothing vacuumed, never blown down with an air line, and changed before entering the welfare cabin.	2 x 3 = 6 Med	
Lung disease not picked up early	Operatives regularly exposed to silica or wood dust, where silicosis or asthma could develop.	3 x 5 = 15 High	- Health surveillance by a competent occupational health provider for anyone regularly exposed to silica dust or wood dust. - Baseline check before exposure or as soon as possible after it starts, then repeat checks at the interval advised. - Coughs, wheeze and breathlessness reported between checks, and the task reviewed.	2 x 5 = 10 Med	Contracts manager

PROJECT	DOCUMENT Dust risk assessment	REVISION	DATE	PAGE 5 of 9
---------	----------------------------------	----------	------	----------------

EQUIPMENT

Plant, equipment and PPE

Plant and equipment

Each item, the checks and certificates it needs, and who may operate it.

PUWER 1998, LOLER 1998

ITEM	CHECKS AND CERTIFICATES	OPERATOR COMPETENCE
On-tool extraction unit, H or M class	Low-flow indicator, hose and filter checked before use; formal check weekly.	Trained user
Water suppression kit	Bottle or supply full; water reaching the blade for the whole cut.	Trained user
Cut-off saw	Blade suited to the material; guard and water feed fitted and working.	Trained operative
Vacuum for clean-up, H or M class	Bags, filters and hose in good order; not a general commercial vacuum.	Trained user
Powered RPE	Battery charged, airflow checked, filter in date before each use.	Trained wearer
Screens and sheeting	Intact and sealed at the edges; no dust escaping to other areas.	Supervisor

Personal protective equipment

PPE is the last line of defence, after the controls above. Specify the type, not just the item.

PPE AT WORK REGULATIONS 1992

ITEM	NEEDED	TYPE AND SPECIFICATION
Safety helmet	☒	To site standard
Safety footwear	☒	Safety boots with protective toecaps
High-visibility clothing	☒	To site standard
Gloves	☒	For cut material and wet slurry
Eye protection	☒	For cutting, chasing, drilling and breaking
Hearing protection	☐	
Respiratory protection Type, and face-fit tested	☒	APF 20 minimum, face-fit tested
Harness or restraint Anchor points identified	☐	

PROJECT	DOCUMENT Dust risk assessment	REVISION	DATE	PAGE 6 of 9
---------	----------------------------------	----------	------	----------------

CONTROLS

Substances, permits, emergencies and the environment

Hazardous substances

Each substance and its COSHH assessment.

COSHH 2002, REGULATION 6

SUBSTANCE	COSHH ASSESSMENT REFERENCE	CONTROLS
Silica dust from concrete, masonry and stone	[COSHH ref]	Water or H/M class extraction; APF 20 RPE, fit-tested; no dry sweeping
Hardwood, softwood and MDF dust	[COSHH ref]	H/M class extraction; pre-cut materials; APF 20 RPE for sanding and longer cutting
Gypsum dust from plasterboard	[COSHH ref]	Extracted sanders, H, M or L class; ventilation; RPE where extraction is not enough

Permits and plans

PERMIT OR PLAN	NEEDED	REFERENCE
Hot work permit	☒	
Permit to work	☒	
Permit to dig or break ground	☐	
Confined space entry	☐	
Lift plan	☐	
Temporary works design	☐	

Emergency and rescue

First aid, fire, and how someone is rescued.
The rescue plan belongs in the RAMS, not after it.

Dust in the eyes is washed out with clean water or eyewash. Anyone who has breathed heavy dust after a control failed moves to fresh air and reports it. Coughs, wheeze or breathlessness are reported to the supervisor and referred to occupational health. A diagnosis of occupational asthma is reportable under RIDDOR regulation 8.

Environment and neighbours

Dust, noise, vibration, waste, spills and hours of work.

Cutting slurry collected and not washed into drains or watercourses. Extractor bags sealed and disposed of as waste, never emptied for reuse. Dust kept on site with water, extraction and screens, and neighbours protected from dust drift.

PROJECT	DOCUMENT Dust risk assessment	REVISION	DATE	PAGE 7 of 9
---------	----------------------------------	----------	------	----------------

DUST CONTROL BY TASK

Task by task dust control

One row for each dusty task on this job. The examples follow HSE CIS36: replace them with your tasks, and record the check made before work starts.

TASK AND MATERIAL	STOP OR REDUCE THE DUST	CONTROL AT SOURCE	RPE	CHECK BEFORE WORK
Cutting blocks, kerbs and paving with a cut-off saw	Fewer cuts at layout; block splitter; material cut off site	Water suppression for the whole cut	APF 20: FFP3, fit-tested	Water bottle full and feed reaching the blade
Chasing walls and raking out mortar	Over-covered or surface cables in place of chases	On-tool extraction, H or M class	APF 20; powered RPE for long runs	Low-flow indicator working; hood seals to the wall
Drilling holes as a main activity	Fewer holes; direct fastening or screws	On-tool extraction, H or M class	APF 20	Hose fitted with an adaptor, not tape
Dry coring	Fewer holes at the design stage; wet coring where possible	On-tool extraction, H or M class	APF 20 for longer work	TEXT in date; unit emptied and bag sealed
Cutting and sanding wood and MDF	Pre-cut and pre-finished materials; dedicated cutting area	On-tool extraction, H or M class	APF 20 for most work	Flow rate right for the tool; filters clean
Sanding plasterboard joints	Tapered-edge boards; finishes that need less sanding	Extracted sander, H, M or L class	Where extraction is not enough	Sander pad holes line up with the extraction
Clean-up of dust and rubble	Waste cut down at design and controlled when it is made	Damp down; H or M class vacuum; covered chutes	APF 20 depending on the task	No brooms for fine dust; no air lines

COSHH REGULATIONS 2002, REGULATIONS 7 AND 9; HSE CIS36(REV3) TABLE 1 AND CIS69

PROJECT	DOCUMENT Dust risk assessment	REVISION	DATE	PAGE 8 of 9
---------	----------------------------------	----------	------	----------------

Briefed before the work starts

DATE AND TIME

[illegible]

PROJECT	DOCUMENT Dust risk assessment	REVISION	DATE	PAGE 9 of 9
---------	----------------------------------	----------	------	----------------