

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 916
(I-13)

Introduced by: American Thoracic Society

Subject: Support Stricter OSHA Silica Permissible Exposure Limit Standard

Referred to: Reference Committee K
(Kenneth M. Certa, MD, Chair)

- 1 Whereas, Research has clearly shown that exposure to respirable crystalline silica leads to
2 significant respiratory disease; and
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4 Whereas, The Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
5 has established permissible exposure limits (PELs) to prevent occupational silicosis; and
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7 Whereas, The current OSHA PEL of 100 µg/m³ adjusted for silica content is not protective of
8 worker health, leading to many cases of preventable silicosis and related diseases; and
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10 Whereas, Low cost commercially available technology exists today to significantly reduce
11 occupational exposure to silica; and
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13 Whereas, Exposure monitoring technology exists to detect silica exposures at lower levels; and
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15 Whereas, Medical surveillance techniques exist to identify adverse health effects from
16 respirable silica exposure and to help assure that individuals can use personal protective
17 equipment such as respirators; and
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19 Whereas, OSHA has proposed lowering the current standard to a permissible exposure limit
20 that is technically feasible and more protective of worker health, therefore be it
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22 RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association support the Department of Labor's
23 Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA's) proposed rule to establish a stricter
24 permissible exposure limit (PEL) for respirable crystalline silica (New HOD Policy); and be it
25 further
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27 RESOLVED, That our AMA support OSHA's proposed rule to establish a stricter standard of
28 exposure assessment and medical surveillance requirements to identify adverse health effects
29 in exposed populations of workers (New HOD Policy); and be it further
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31 RESOLVED, That our AMA submit comments, in collaboration with respiratory and occupational
32 health medical societies, in support of a stricter silica PEL. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

Received: 10/15/13