



# News Release

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U.S. Department of Labor  
Office of Public Affairs  
Washington, D.C.  
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For Immediate Release

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## **OSHA extends comment period on proposed silica rule to provide additional time for public input**

**WASHINGTON** – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration is extending the public comment period for an additional 47 days on the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Occupational Exposure to Crystalline Silica.

In response to requests for an extension, the deadline to submit written comments and testimony is being extended from Dec. 11, 2013, to Jan. 27, 2014, to allow stakeholders additional time to comment on the proposed rule and supporting analyses.

OSHA is also extending the deadline to submit notices of intention to appear at its informal public hearings by an additional 30 days, from Nov. 12, 2013, to Dec. 12, 2013. Public hearings are scheduled to begin on March 18, 2014. The duration of the hearings will be determined by the number of parties who request to appear. The hearings are expected to continue for several weeks.

The notice of proposed rulemaking was published in the Federal Register on Sept. 12, 2013. The proposed rule was made available to the public on OSHA’s website Aug. 23, 2013.

“We strongly encourage the public to assist in the process of developing a final rule by submitting written comments and participating in public hearings,” said Assistant Secretary of Labor for Occupational Safety and Health Dr. David Michaels. “We especially hope to hear from employers, workers and public health professionals who have experience in successfully protecting workers from silica-related diseases. We are extending the comment period to ensure we hear from all stakeholders who wish to participate.”

The extended comment period and public hearings will be followed with a post-hearing comment period. Members of the public who filed a timely written notice of intention to appear will be able to submit post-hearing comments to the docket.

Additional information on the proposed rule, including five fact sheets and procedures for submitting written comments and participating in public hearings, is available at <http://www.osha.gov/silica/>. Members of the public may comment on the proposal by visiting <http://www.regulations.gov>.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing safe and healthful workplaces for their employees. OSHA’s role is to ensure these conditions for America’s working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, education and assistance. For more information, visit [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov).



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