Silica Dust Dangers and Safety Measures Fatality Report



There are three types of silicosis:

Chronic silicosis, the most common form of the disease, usually develops after 10 or more years of exposure to relatively low dust concentrations.

Accelerated silicosis results from exposure to high concentrations of silica over a 5- to 10-year period.

Acute silicosis is a rare but highly fatal disease that is caused by brief but massive exposure to dust with high quartz content.

The unchecked use of silica in industry continued. In March and April of 2014 at OSHA hearings, Hispanic and immigrant workers testified to their experience working with silica.

Jonas Mendoza a construction worker from New Jersey said that proper equipment and training is not available in many construction jobs. In the construction industry contractors do not provide the workers with the basics to do the job. “If you ask for protective equipment, they give you a mask from the 99-cent store to shut you up.”

Santos Edilberto Alemendarez who came to the United States from Honduras in 2007. He described his experience manufacturing cabinets out of wood and granite at a small factory in Texas.

“The process of cutting the granite was dry and this produced an excessive amount of dust generated by cutting a processing the granite. The dust filled the entire environment in the place. The company did not provide adequate protection for the workers and they did not provide dust masks to protect their employees. During the time I was at Craft Master I was inhaling granite dust most of the time. Regularly I wore a dust mask but this was not adequate to protect himself from such dust.”

“We are exposed to the poison,” said José Granado, a construction worker from Houston who came to the United States from El Salvador 15 year ago.

“I came to U.S. looking for a better life. However due to risky and unsafe work that I’m doing in the construction industry, it looks like instead of getting a better life, I came to give mine away.”