

**To: OSHA's Docket Office at 202-693-1648**

**Re: OSHA-2010-0034**

**From: James Hieb, Marble Institute of America**

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### **OSHA's Proposed Silica Rule A Serious Concern for Construction Industry According to MIA**

**Cleveland, OH, August 29, 2013** — In a statement issued on August 23, 2013, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued notice that they intend to reduce the current silica dust exposure rate by 50%. The Marble Institute of America (MIA) is urging the OSHA to maintain current levels as they are appropriate if adhered to. Data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) show a greater than 90 percent reduction in the silicosis mortality rate from 1968 to 2010. It is doubted that a further reduction of the allowable exposure limits will impact those numbers.

Advances in wet cutting and stone industry education have positively aided OSHA in the effort to curb silica exposure during the past few years. The MIA believes that OSHA will continue to have a positive impact if attention is focused on compliance at the current exposure levels.

The natural stone industry advocates the use of proper equipment, training, vigilance and continual monitoring to minimize the risk of silicosis. The MIA has produced videos, handouts, and training guidelines on awareness and prevention and is providing many of those resources free-of-charge to stone companies online at [www.marble-institute.com/silica](http://www.marble-institute.com/silica).

"We consider ourselves partners with OSHA in this effort, and believe strongly that safety is paramount," said James Hieb, MIA Executive Vice President. Independent studies have estimated costs for construction industry compliance will well exceed \$1 billion per year. He added, "don't hamper economic growth for companies who are in compliance at the current levels."

#### **About the Marble Institute of America (MIA)**

For over 65 years the Marble Institute of America (MIA) has been the world's leading information resource and advocate for the natural dimension stone industry. MIA members include marble, granite, limestone, sandstone, and other natural stone producers and quarriers, fabricators, installers, distributors, and contractors around the world. Additional information about safety can be found online at [www.marble-institute.com/silica](http://www.marble-institute.com/silica).