

# About the Data

## California Engineered Stone (ES) Silicosis Surveillance

### Background

Silicosis is an occupational lung disease caused by inhalation of dust containing respirable crystalline silica. Silicosis is a progressive, incurable, and potentially fatal disease. In recent years, silicosis has been identified among young engineered stone (**ES**) countertop workers in California.

### Case Definition

#### Confirmed ES-Silicosis case:

1. Meets the NIOSH case definition of silicosis (see below).
2. Has silica exposures associated with countertop fabrication.

#### NIOSH Case Definition of Silicosis:

History of occupational exposure to airborne silica dust and either or both: Imaging showing abnormalities interpreted as consistent with silicosis or lung histopathology consistent with silicosis. View [Silicosis Reporting Guidelines \(NIOSH\)](#). Only Confirmed ES cases are displayed on the dashboard, which are a subset of all silicosis cases identified in California.

### Data sources for reports of engineered stone silicosis cases:

- Statewide hospital utilization records from the California Department of Health Care Access and Information (HCAI). Any encounter including a silicosis diagnosis (ICD-10: J62.8) in any of the diagnosis code fields is included in the surveillance system:
  - Inpatient Discharge (PDD) Data: nonpublic dataset of inpatient data collected from California-licensed hospitals in California. The dataset consists of a record for each inpatient discharged from a California-licensed hospital, including general acute care, acute psychiatric, chemical dependency recovery, and psychiatric health facilities.
  - Emergency Department (ED) encounter data: nonpublic dataset of emergency care data collected from hospital emergency departments. Reportable ED encounters include only those patients who had face-to-face contact with a provider.
- Electronic Case Reporting (eCR)/Reportable Conditions Knowledge Management System (RCKMS): System that enables automated eCR to public health agencies via electronic health records, using previously established criteria. Participating healthcare organizations automatically generate and send an initial case report when trigger criteria, such as diagnosis codes or laboratory results, are met within electronic health records. In the context of silicosis, any healthcare encounter from a participating healthcare organization that includes a silicosis diagnosis in the patient's problem list is sent to CDPH for silicosis surveillance.

- Voluntary reporting by healthcare providers, Tuberculosis Controllers, or community members to CDPH.
- Public health follow-up of mandated medical testing following worksite investigations
- Doctor's First Reports of Occupational Injury or Illness (DFR): all physicians are required to complete a DFR form within five days of initial examination for work-related injuries or illnesses statewide.
- Forthcoming: Title 17 Reportable Condition: The California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Section 2505 requires reporting of certain diseases of public health importance to the local health department. Silicosis is expected to be added soon; results are expected to be received via The California Reportable Disease Information Exchange (CalREDIE), which is already available for reporting silicosis cases.

Reports received from the above sources are reviewed by Occupational Health Branch staff to determine if they meet the case definition specified above; only those considered confirmed ES-Silicosis cases are included in the dashboard.

### **Data Limitation**

These data are likely an underestimate of the true burden of ES-Silicosis in California, due to underdiagnosis of silicosis cases, the existence of cases that are not captured by the data sources described above, and lack of information in reports indicating that exposure is associated with engineered stone.

### **Suggested Citation**

California Department of Public Health, Occupational Health Branch, California Engineered Stone Silicosis Dashboard, Access Date: MM/DD/YYYY.

### **Link**

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDPHP/DEODC/OHB/Pages/essdashboard.aspx>