

**Ministry of Labour, Immigration,  
Training and Skills Development**

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November 3, 2023

Dear Occupational Health and Safety System Partners,

As Ontario's Chief Prevention Officer, I am pleased to announce the launch by the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) of the new, free web-based [Silica Control Tool](#).

Each year approximately 153,000 Ontario workers are exposed to silica, which can lead to significant health problems, including silicosis, a serious and irreversible lung disease, and lung cancer.

The Silica Control Tool is a free resource designed to help Ontario's construction sector assess whether, and how much, workers are exposed to silica, and develop job-specific exposure control plans to limit the hazard. The tool has the potential to expand to other sectors, like mining and industrial, to reduce silica exposures in more Ontario workplaces.

Key features of the Silica Control Tool include:

- Estimates airborne silica exposure based on common construction practices.
- Guides users to select and implement effective control measures to reduce the risk of exposure.
- Allows users to select their work processes, materials and tasks for better accuracy.
- Produces an exposure control plan in a shareable PDF format.

The Ontario version of the tool was a project of the Occupational Illness Prevention Steering Committee and will be hosted by OHCOW in partnership with the B.C. Construction Safety Association, the Infrastructure Health and Safety Association and the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.

The launch of the Silica Control Tool marks a major step towards addressing some of the findings and recommendations from the [Occupational Disease Landscape Review](#) released in October 2023. The tool will help empower employers and workers – from workplaces and operations of all sizes – to understand the hazards and prevention strategies related to working with silica.

I invite you to explore the Silica Control Tool firsthand and witness the transformative impact it can have. I believe that this tool will enhance the safety of Ontario workers and workplaces for years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel R. K. Moody". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Joel Moody  
Chief Prevention Officer  
Ontario Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development