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FAQs — Using engineered stone on your next project, renovation and in your home

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What practices do Edstein have in place to ensure the safety of its workers when fabricating my benchtops in their factory?

Edstein manages the risk of silica exposure to its factory team by taking the following precautions:

- All manufacturing is completely wet throughout the process through our factory.
- Edstein enforces strictly no dry cutting anywhere, ever! **No Exceptions.**
- We utilise the latest in European technology. Edstein boasts an array of the best saws, CNCs and polishing equipment available on the market and is constantly looking at what investments is required to stay ahead of the industry.
- Being a wet manufacturing process, water suppresses and captures the dust, processing it through our water filtration system, forming sludge bricks to be safely disposed. Our water is then cleaned and recycled to be used again throughout the factory.
- Our manufacturing team are extensively trained in silica safety.
- All production team members are provided, and must use, a 3M battery powered positive pressure full face air filtered mask as recommended by Safe Work Australia.
- All our bins and waste disposal system operate under water sprinkler systems, suppressing dust and minimising exposure to any team members during waste disposal.
- Our factory surfaces are cleaned regularly throughout the day to ensure dust cannot collect and become a hazard.

What practices to Edstein have in place to ensure the safety of its clients when installing or repairing my benchtops?

Edstein manages the risk of silica exposure to its clients and onsite installation teams by taking the following precautions:

- Our Check Measure Team will measure your project using the latest in electronic measuring equipment to ensure precise and accurate measurements, synchronising directly with our machinery to eliminate the need to cut or grind any stone onsite.

- Individual pieces are washed with fresh clean water to ensure they are dust free once leaving the factory.
- Prior to commencing any work, a Risk Assessment is performed by our installation team to identify any potential hazard to you, the client, and themselves throughout the installation.
- Our installation team will provide you with an overview of the work that will be performed to ensure you are comfortable.
- Any minor alterations, drilling or polishing, where possible, will be taken outside your house and performed in a well-ventilated controlled area with suitable equipment and PPE.
- Our installation teams are equipped with the latest tools and equipment to safely perform basic polishing and alterations onsite. This includes water suppression equipment for any dust and the ability to capture stone dust spoil for safe disposal.
- Our installation team are extensively trained in silica safety and are provided, and must use, a 3M battery powered positive pressure full face air filtered mask as recommended by Safe Work Australia.
- Very rarely should there be a need to make alterations or drill stone inside your home. Should there be a special circumstance, or a repair required, where alterations or drilling is only possible where the benchtop is located, you will be consulted on what measures need to be put in place to create a controlled environment to perform the work required. These controls will include you and your family not being present in the workspace and the installation team isolating the area and controlling and disposing of the dust.
- Our team members are extensive trained in essential housekeeping to ensure your house is left neat, tidy and dust free.
- Our team will notify you once the work has been completed, ask you to inspect their work and the area to ensure you are happy with your benchtops, happy your house has been left clean and no further cleaning is required.

Are there aspects of the home installation process that are hazardous?

While small amounts of silica dust may be produced during installation, it is captured and controlled as part of the process, and thus poses no health risk for silicosis and other diseases caused by silica dust. Our atmospheric testing conducted by Occupational Hygienist on our installation team has found that these exposure levels are well below the SafeWork recommended levels during our installation process.

Once installed in my home, is engineered stone hazardous to my family and should I be concerned for our health?

Engineered stone surfaces are completely safe once installed and comply with the strictest local and international and national safety standards for consumer use.

The health risk lies in the manufacture and installation process. All stonemasons must follow the recommended installation and safety guidelines provided by Safework Australia.

The Code of Practice – Managing the risks of respirable crystalline silica from engineered stone in the workplace, issued by SafeWork NSW in February 2022 states:

Engineered stone that is already installed in the home or workplace is not a risk to health unless it is disturbed through mechanical processes such as cutting, sanding, grinding, drilling or polishing.

What is Edstein doing to ensure the ongoing health of their workers?

Edstein works in conjunction with a private medical health provider to monitor all workers who manage stone. Annual lung function testing and imaging is undertaken to ensure worker health is monitored and no lung irritation is occurring. Edstein also carries out air quality atmospheric testing both in the factory and in the field to ensure no worker is exposed. By working with leading Occupational Physicians, therapists and hygienists Edstein works to instill confidence within our team that they are working in a safe environment with no risk to their health.

When the time comes to renovate my kitchen how do I safely remove and dispose of my engineered stone benchtop?

We recommend always using a licensed tradesperson, stonemason, or building company when removing your stone benchtop.

The link below takes you to the Housing Industry Association web page which outlines advice for safe removal of engineered stone benchtops.

<https://hia.com.au/resources-and-advice/managing-your-safety/working-with-silica/articles/removal-of-engineered-stone>

Have any further concerns about using engineered stone or have any questions?

The safety of our clients and team is taken very seriously at Edstein. We want to ensure you have full confidence when collaborating with us on your next project. Please do not hesitate to contact our team, we are happy to walk you through our processes and answer any question that you may have.