

## Prevention of stone dust inhalation for stone carvers

Inhalation of stone dust is a common and severe problem faced by labourers working in stone quarry and stone crushing units. The silica traces present in the stones, if inhaled, can cause a respiratory ailment known as 'Silicosis'. The disease in its severe form can be fatal, and there is no known cure for silicosis till date.

Type of stones involved includes sandstone and white marble. Stone quarry workers deal with sandstone, and the stone carvers work on white marbles. The workers in the unorganized sectors are most affected since they do not have the proper economic and social support to create a safe working environment for themselves. The images below show the stone carving techniques (manual and mechanised) used in a mine near Bharatpur, Rajasthan.



Technical solutions are required that can prevent the inhalation of stone dust by the artisans. This may include dust suppression at the source, low-cost masks, controlled environments, etc., based on the technical and economic feasibility.