

# Best Practice

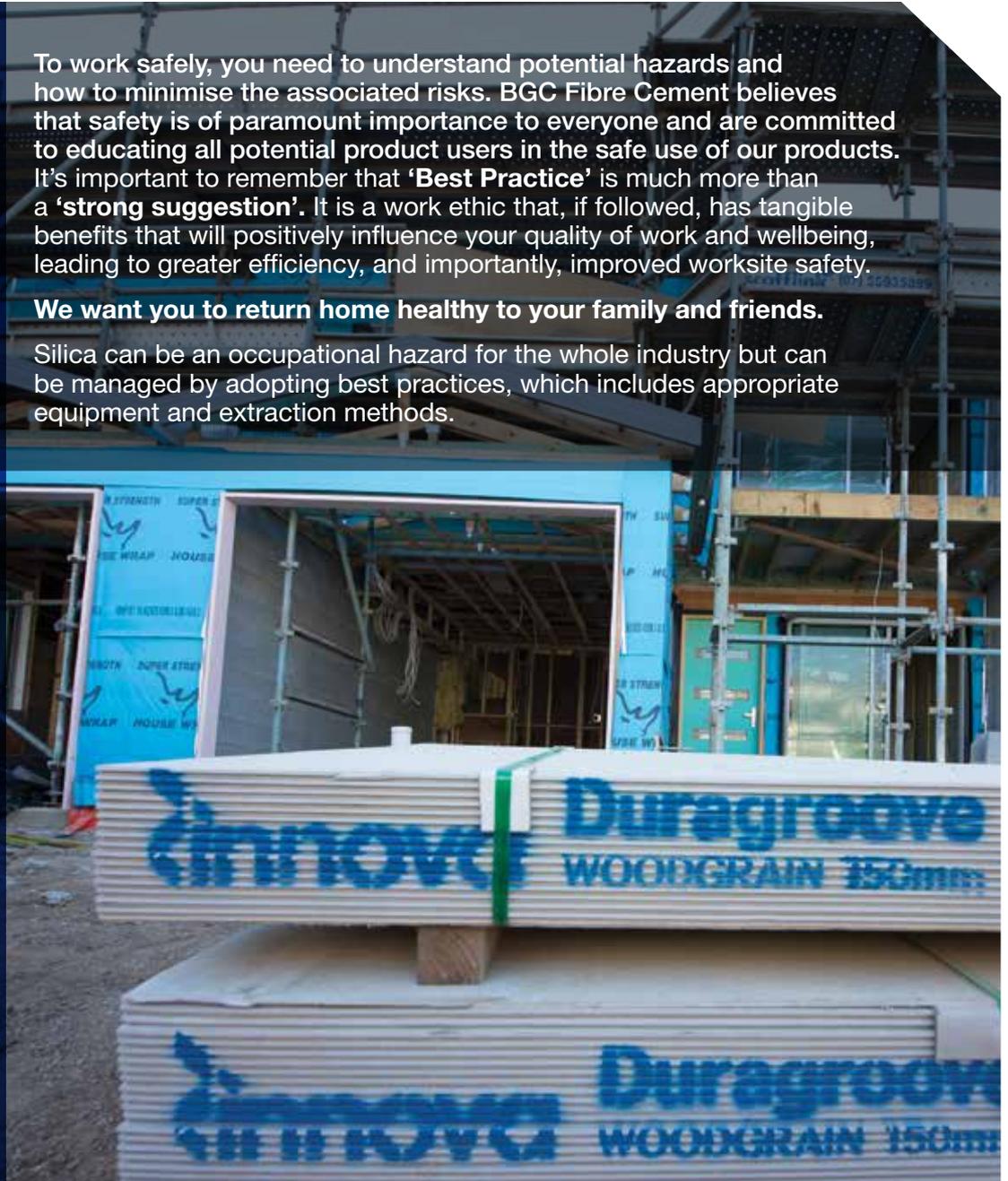
## Working safely with BGC Fibre Cement Products

To work safely, you need to understand potential hazards and how to minimise the associated risks. BGC Fibre Cement believes that safety is of paramount importance to everyone and are committed to educating all potential product users in the safe use of our products. It's important to remember that **'Best Practice'** is much more than a **'strong suggestion'**. It is a work ethic that, if followed, has tangible benefits that will positively influence your quality of work and wellbeing, leading to greater efficiency, and importantly, improved worksite safety.

**We want you to return home healthy to your family and friends.**

Silica can be an occupational hazard for the whole industry but can be managed by adopting best practices, which includes appropriate equipment and extraction methods.

bgcinnoavadesign.com.au



Best Practice is a three stage approach

- 1 // Silica Awareness
- 2 // Best Practice
- 3 // Equipment



Silica sand is one of the most common varieties of sand found in the world. It is used for a wide range of applications. Sand is the general term for broken down granules of minerals or rocks, technically between about one-sixteenth of a millimeter to two millimeters in diameter, falling between silt and gravel in the spectrum of sizes. There are many varieties of sand in the world, each with their own unique composition and qualities. Commonly known as sand or quartz, silica is found in many common building products, including concrete, bricks, grout, wallboard, ceramic tiles, glass, dirt and all fibre cement

### The hazard

(The capability to cause harm)  
Silica, when it's intact, is harmless. However, when it is cut, drilled or otherwise abraded, silica is released as fine particles that can be inhaled deep into the lungs. Breathing excessive amounts of respirable silica can cause a potentially fatal lung disease called silicosis, and has been linked with other diseases. Some international authorities consider respirable silica to be a cause of cancer. Some studies suggest smoking may increase these risks.

### The risk

(The likelihood of the hazard causing harm)  
BGC Fibre Cement best practice recommendations are designed to minimise the risk of harm from silica exposure. BGC Fibre Cement products meet or exceed all applicable government safety standards when used in accordance with best practice including recommended tooling guidelines. **For further detail, BGC Fibre Cement have a detailed Safety Data Sheet available.**

### Risk Factors

// Exposure concentration  
// Duration and frequency of exposure  
// External health factors

Silica is the second most common mineral on earth and is found in many common building products including fibre cement.

### Best Practice

BGC believes that safety is the number one priority on your work site. BGC is committed to educating users of its product in correct safe use methods. Best practice information on all BGC products can be found in our installation instructions and technical specifications. If there is additional concern about silica exposure levels, you should always consult a qualified industrial hygienist.

A directory can be found at [www.aioh.org.au](http://www.aioh.org.au).

BGC recommends you to always **minimise dust exposures**. When sanding, rebating, cutting, drilling or carrying out other machining of fibre cement products, as well as following our recommended cutting instructions, you should always wear a P1 or P2 respirator and warn others in the immediate area.



## Cutting Indoors

Cut using only the score and snap, hand guillotine or fibre shears (manual, electric or pneumatic).

## Cutting Outdoors

Position cutting station so that wind will blow dust away from the user or others working in the area. Use one of the following methods based on the required cutting rate:

**Best //**  
Score and snap



**Best //**  
Hand guillotine



**Best //**  
Fibre shear



**Good //** Dust-reducing circular saw connected to a vacuum with HEPA filter.



For maximum protection, BGC recommends always using “Best” level cutting methods where feasible.

// **NEVER** use a power saw indoors.

// **NEVER** use a circular saw blade that is not designed to cut Fibre Cement.

// **NEVER** dry sweep - use wet suppression or HEPA vacuum.

// **NEVER** use grinders without appropriate respiratory protection (e.g. minimum P1 or P2 respirator).

// **ALWAYS** follow tool manufacturer’s safety recommendations.

// P1 and P2 respirators can be used in conjunction with cutting practices to further reduce dust exposure.

## Warning

**Do not breathe dust and cut only in well ventilated areas.**

BGC Fibre Cement products contain sand, a source of respirable crystalline silica which is considered by some international authorities to be a cause of cancer from some occupational sources. Breathing excessive amounts of respirable silica dust can also cause a disabling and potentially fatal lung disease called silicosis, and has been linked with other diseases. Some studies suggest smoking may increase these risks.

## During installation or handling

1. Work in outdoor areas with ample ventilation;
2. Minimise dust when cutting by using either a ‘score and snap’ knife, fibre cement shears or, where not feasible, use a fibre cement saw blade and dust reducing circular saw attached to a HEPA vacuum;
3. Warn others in the immediate area to avoid breathing dust;
4. Wear a properly fitted, approved dust mask or respirator (e.g. P1 or P2) in accordance with applicable government regulations and manufacturer instructions to further limit respirable silica exposures;
5. During clean-up, use HEPA vacuums or wet cleanup methods – never dry sweep.

For further information, refer to our website for the most up to date SDS for all BGC Fibre Cement and Innova™ Products: [www.bgcinnovadesign.com.au](http://www.bgcinnovadesign.com.au)

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