



Engineered Stone Ban FAQ



What is engineered stone?

Engineered stone is a manufactured construction material. It is used for things like floors, benches and splashbacks and can be found in kitchens and bathrooms. It also goes by other names like composite stone, manufactured stone and artificial stone.

When working with engineered stone, activities like cutting, drilling and polishing release silica dust. If you breathe in silica dust, it can lead to a life threatening disease called silicosis.

What is silicosis?

Silicosis is a life threatening disease that comes from breathing in silica dust. The disease causes permanent damage to the lungs.

Because of the high risk of exposure to silica dust, anyone who works with engineered stone is at a greater risk of contracting silicosis.

While there is no cure for silicosis, it is easily preventable, which is why the engineered stone ban has been put in place.

You can find more information about silicosis on the Safe Work Australia website.

Information is available in the following languages:

- Arabic
- Chinese Simplified
- Chinese Traditional
- English
- Greek
- Italian
- Vietnamese



What is the engineered stone ban?

All states and territories in Australia have banned the manufacture, supply, processing and installation of engineered stone benchtops, panels and slabs.

The ban falls under work health and safety laws and will protect workers in the engineered stone industry, their families and the community as a whole.

The ban is in place to prevent and reduce the number of deaths from silicosis. The Australian Government will also ban the importation of engineered stone benchtops, slabs and panels from 1 January 2025.

Why did we ban engineered stone?

The ban was put in place following a rise in the diagnosis of silicosis among engineered stone workers.

The decision was made by every Australian state and territory based on the recommendation from Safe Work Australia.

The engineered stone ban will keep workers, their families and the community safe. By banning engineered stone, we can protect everyone from a life threatening but avoidable disease.

How does the ban impact multicultural communities?

Multicultural communities represent a large percentage of the engineered stone workforce. Because of this, the risk of silicosis is a significant issue for multicultural workers, many of whom are young men.

The ban is an important step in keeping all engineered stone workers safe from an avoidable disease. By doing so, we can create a healthy future for their families and the industry they work for.

When did the ban start?

The ban started on 1 July 2024. However, each state and territory has specific arrangements in place to help with the transition.

Every state and territory has made their own changes to work health and safety laws to implement the ban. It is important to stay up to date with the laws that apply in your location.

What is included in the ban?

The ban applies to the manufacture, supply, processing and installation of any engineered stone benchtops, panels and slabs.

What is not included in the ban?

The ban does not apply to repairs, removals or minor modifications to engineered stone products that are already installed and the work is controlled. Control methods can include using a wet dust suppression system, an on-tool dust extraction system or an exhaust ventilation system.

The ban does not include finished engineered stone products that do not need to be processed or modified, such as prefabricated sinks, jewellery or garden ornaments.

I run a business / I am a tradesperson who works with engineered stone. What should I do?

Make sure you are up to date with your state or territory's work and health safety laws. You can visit the Safe Work Australia website to check the laws in each state.

If you work with engineered stone you must eliminate or minimise risks from exposure to silica dust as much as possible, and follow your state's work health and safety regulations. Doing so will protect yourself, your workers and the wider community.

Any work on engineered stone must be controlled. Control methods can include using a wet dust suppression system, an on-tool dust extraction system or an exhaust ventilation system.

By following the new work health and safety laws you can keep your workers and community safe.

I've heard some people compare engineered stone to asbestos. Is it safe to have in my home or workplace?

Engineered stone is not the same as asbestos. If you already have engineered stone installed in your home or workplace, it is safe as long as it is not disturbed. This means that you, your family and friends are not at risk, so long as you don't cut, drill or modify the stone.

You can carry out repairs or minor modifications to engineered stone, but you should contact a qualified tradesperson to do the work.

A qualified tradesperson will know the necessary safety precautions and be able to handle, remove and dispose of engineered stone correctly and safely.

If you're planning a DIY project with engineered stone, do not do it yourself. The silica dust released when working with engineered stone can be extremely harmful when inhaled.



Where can I find more information?

To find out more about the ban and what you need to do, visit www.dewr.gov.au/engineeredstone and www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/esban

For help with information in any language, call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 and ask for an interpreter.