

# ABRASIVE BLASTING MANUFACTURERS ALLIANCE

## OSHA'S UPDATED BERYLLIUM RULE: FAQs

OSHA recently issued proposed rulemaking to modify its beryllium rule to remove abrasive blasting from most provisions, but misinformation surrounding the rule has continued to circulate. Below are some answers to frequently asked questions about the Rule and its impact on the abrasive blasting industry.

**Q:** What is the current status of the OSHA Beryllium Rule?

**A:** OSHA has issued a new proposed rulemaking to revoke the ancillary provisions of the Rule applicable to the Construction and Shipyard sectors, which pertain to abrasive blasting, but retain the new lower PEL of 0.2  $\mu$ /m<sup>3</sup> and the STEL of 2.0  $\mu$ /m<sup>3</sup> for those sectors. OSHA has also agreed not to enforce the ancillary provisions for Construction and Shipyards until further notice. OSHA's rulemaking process for Construction and Shipyards is expected to conclude sometime in 2018.

**Q:** What do the new PEL and STEL reductions mean and how do they impact current blasting operations?

**A:** It is The ABMA's understanding that abrasive blasting operations will be able to meet the new PEL and STEL by following the pre-existing OSHA regulations that were in place prior to the January 2017 OSHA Beryllium Rule. If you have any questions about a particular blasting operation, however, you should consult a qualified industrial hygienist.

**Q:** Some crushed glass abrasive manufacturers claim that their products are beryllium free and, thus, are not subject to the OSHA Beryllium Rule. Is this true?

**A:** No. The ABMA released on 1/12/18 the results of an independent study assessing the beryllium content of 9 samples of crushed glass abrasives from major manufacturers and distributors in the industry. The study showed that every glass sample contained beryllium in concentrations between 0.270 and 0.757 mg/kg. These findings should lay to rest the false claims and advertising that some manufacturers of glass abrasives have deployed to mislead customers about the supposed benefits of their products. Further, as beryllium is now confirmed to be present in these glass abrasives, it is clear that they are subject to the OSHA Beryllium Rule.

**Q:** Doesn't removal of the ancillary provisions of the OSHA Beryllium Rule for the Construction and Shipyard sectors subject workers in those sectors to health dangers?

**A:** No. OSHA itself has preliminarily determined in its proposed rulemaking that eliminating the ancillary provisions for the Construction and Shipyard sectors is warranted because workers in these sectors are already covered by a substantial number of existing regulations that fully protect their safety.

For more information, contact [info@theabma.com](mailto:info@theabma.com)