

Talk 4: Air Quality & Dust Control



Why This Matters

Poor air quality affects everyone – workers, neighbors, and the environment. Excessive dust can cause respiratory problems, reduce visibility creating safety hazards, and settle on properties causing complaints. Vehicle emissions contribute to climate change and local air pollution.

Sources of Air Pollution on Site

- ✓ Dust from earthworks, cutting, grinding, or demolition
- ✓ Dust from vehicle movements on unsealed roads
- ✓ Exhaust emissions from vehicles and equipment
- ✓ Dust from stockpiles on windy days

Dust Control Best Practices

- ✓ Dampen haul roads and work areas before and during dusty work
- ✓ Reduce vehicle speeds on unsealed surfaces
- ✓ Use dust extraction or suppression when cutting, drilling, or grinding
- ✓ Cover or seed long-term stockpiles to keep soil in place
- ✓ Schedule dusty activities when wind is calm whenever possible
- ✓ Inspect barriers, fencing, and water carts daily

Vehicle & Equipment Emissions

- ✓ Switch engines off when stationary – no idling
- ✓ Service plant and vehicles according to schedule
- ✓ Use the right-sized equipment for the job to avoid overworking engines
- ✓ Report excessive smoke or unusual odors immediately
- ✓ Use low-sulfur fuels where available

High-Risk Conditions

Increase controls when:

- Winds exceed site limits or change direction suddenly
- Vegetation is dry and surrounding neighbors are close
- Multiple dusty activities occur at the same time

Pause work if dust leaves the boundary – prevention is cheaper than complaints.

Monitoring & Housekeeping

- ✓ Check perimeter areas for dust build-up twice daily
- ✓ Clean up fine materials promptly – don't let them dry out
- ✓ Log water cart runs and dust suppression actions
- ✓ Install windsocks or monitors where required and record readings

Personal Protection

- ✓ Wear the correct respiratory protection when controls alone are insufficient
- ✓ Ensure respirators are fit-tested and maintained
- ✓ Wash hands and face before breaks to avoid ingesting dust

Discussion Points

- ✓ Where are our dust suppression resources located?
- ✓ How do we decide when to stop work due to wind?
- ✓ Have we received any complaints recently?
- ✓ What else can we do to cut idling time?

Clean Air Belongs to Everyone

Every cloud of dust or puff of exhaust travels beyond our site boundary. Control it at the source to protect our team and our neighbors.