

Data survey of silicosis occupational diseases in the industry of extractive and processing of ornamental rocks in Braga and Viana do Castelo districts

Levantamento de Dados da Doença Profissional Silicose na Indústria de Extração e Transformação de Rochas Ornamentais nos Distritos de Braga e Viana do Castelo

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BACKGROUND: Silicosis, characterized by the development of pulmonary fibrosis with progressive impairment of pulmonary function, is caused by the inhalation of silica particles and is a common cause of occupational lung diseases worldwide. The disease develops rapidly and irreversibly over decades and cannot be cured currently. In addition, silicosis has been associated with several lung diseases; e.g., it has been shown in several studies and that occupational exposure to silica particles is associated with an increased incidence of lung cancer, especially among individuals with silicosis. Currently occupational diseases are a matter of concern that involves many financial costs for companies, workers and for society.

OBJECTIVES: This study aims to make a statistical survey with the relevant entities, including the Authority for Working Conditions (ACT) and the Department of Protection against Occupational Risks (DPRP), integrated department at the Institute of Social Security of the respective districts. Proposals for improvements to be able to improve the investigation of occupational diseases and thereby reduce costs for companies, workers and society in general.

METHODOLOGY: The methodology of this study is based on a review of literature on the subject and includes the development of a questionnaire on silicosis occupational diseases in the extraction and processing industry of ornamental rocks. The questionnaire will be mailed to the Department of Protection Against Occupational Risks (DPRP), Authority for Working Conditions (ACT) and some companies of the districts of Braga and Viana do Castelo.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS: With this study it is intended to characterize the evolution of silicosis in the extractive and processing industry of ornamental rocks during the past years in Minho region. It is intended to alert for the lack of statistical studies about professional diseases. This data is important to alert the competent authorities that there will be an inspective work that needs to be done in companies where these diseases are contracted. It is very useful to the general society know the number of professional diseases annually recognized by Department of Protection Against Occupational Risks (DPRP).

Keywords: Occupational diseases, Industry extraction and transformation of ornamental rocks, silica, silicosis.