



 caesarstone®

We craft  
Sustainable Benchtops

# Caesarstone – A Safe and Sustainable Stone Industry

## What is Caesarstone?

Caesarstone is the company that manufactures and distributes a range of engineered stone and porcelain surfaces for homes and businesses, such as kitchen benchtops. While the name Caesarstone is commonly used to describe all engineered stone products, Caesarstone is one brand of engineered stone.

## Are Caesarstone surfaces safe in my home?

Yes, completely. All engineered stone – and most stone materials such as slate, granite, sandstone, concrete, marble, and porcelain – contains some level of silica. In its solid form – such as in installed engineered stone benchtops – silica is considered by experts to be perfectly safe. There is no risk to those choosing to have a Caesarstone benchtop or surface in their home. Silica is only dangerous when released as dust through the fabrication of the stone – cutting, drilling, grinding, or polishing. In this process, workers exposed to silica dust through poor safety practices can develop serious health issues, including the lung disease silicosis.

## Who fabricates engineered stone?

Caesarstone sells its products in slab form to independent stonemasons, who cut and shape it to size for kitchen retailers, cabinet makers and builders. It is this process that releases silica dust, which can create risks for workers if it is not handled using proper safety equipment and procedures.

## Is this process safe for stonemasons?

The risks of silica dust and silicosis are well documented and understood. However, all silica-containing materials, including engineered stone, can be handled safely if proper equipment is used and proper procedures are followed. These include masks, ventilation, air monitoring and 'wet cutting', where water is used to suppress dust. Around Australia there are clear standards in place for the safe handling of stone products. These standards are enforced by work safety bodies in each State and Territory.

## When a stonemason makes modifications onsite, is this dangerous to the consumer?

Caesarstone always recommends that fabrication of our products is performed in a controlled environment, such as a factory or workshop. When an installer decides that minor adjustments are necessary onsite, they must follow proper safety procedures, such as wet-cutting to eliminate dust.

## What else is Caesarstone doing to help?

Since it began operating in Australia, Caesarstone has consistently taken action to promote a safe engineered stone industry. These efforts have included clear product handling and safety guidelines, warnings on each of our products sold and ongoing education and training programs for stonemasons. Caesarstone is also actively developing products that contain a lower percentage of silica. Caesarstone has engaged extensively with government, work safety bodies and industry to help foster better understanding of the issues related to silicosis and to promote safer working conditions.

## Why not just ban engineered stone?

A ban on engineered stone would not solve the issue of silicosis. Even if engineered stone is banned, the presence of silica in all substitute materials (except wood and laminates) and in industries such as tunnelling, and construction means Australian workers will continue to face the risk of silicosis. There is no logic in banning one product that must be handled in exactly the same manner as all similar products, particularly with new low-silica engineered stone products containing less silica than some natural stone. The key to protecting stonemasons is the rigorous application of safe handling practices.

## What is the future for engineered stone in Australia?

We hope and expect Australian governments will adopt a nationwide approach to managing the risks of silica dust and silicosis. This should involve a rigorous and enforceable nationwide licensing scheme for fabricators to ensure that proper safety standards are followed to protect workers. We expect the industry to move towards low-silica engineered stone products, bringing them into line with many natural stones. Caesarstone supports these changes and is here to stay in Australia.

Read more about Caesarstone's ongoing efforts to build a safe and sustainable stone industry

[caesarstone.com.au/caesarstone-health-safety/](https://caesarstone.com.au/caesarstone-health-safety/)