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Mineralogic and Health Risk of Respirable Dust Exposures: Current Progress and Future Challenges

Guest Editors:

Dr. Tim Jones

Department of Earth Sciences,
Cardiff University, Cardiff CF1 3YE,
UK

Dr. Kelly Bérubé

School of Biosciences, Cardiff
University, Cardiff, UK

Prof. Dr. Longyi Shao

College of Geoscience and
Surveying Engineering, China
University of Mining and
Technology (Beijing), Beijing
100083, China

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Message from the Guest Editors

Respirable dust can be defined as mineral grains capable of entering the human lung, and once inside the lung they are capable of causing adverse health effects. These effects can be temporary or permanent damage, leading to a large range of different diseases. Typically, these diseases are either cancer such as mesothelioma from asbestos exposure or non-cancerous such as the fibrotic disease silicosis from respirable crystalline quartz. There is a growing knowledge base about the biotoxicity of different minerals, the sizes and shapes of those mineral grains, and possible health outcomes. Current research is targeting specific minerals, both naturally occurring minerals as well as manufactured mineral materials typically used in the construction industry amongst others. The technology used collect airborne minerals is constantly improving, along with improvements in monitoring networks. Advances are constantly being achieved in assessment of mineral biotoxicity. A clear trend in this research is a movement away from conventional toxicity involving animal models to state-of-the-art techniques using in-vivo models and genomics.



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Editor-in-Chief

Dr. Demetrio Raldúa

Department Environmental
Chemistry, IDAEA-CSIC, Jordi
Girona 18, 08034 Barcelona,
Spain

Message from the Editor-in-Chief

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Contact Us

Toxics Editorial Office
MDPI, St. Alban-Anlage 66
4052 Basel, Switzerland

Tel: +41 61 683 77 34
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