

Silica Gel Crystal is a Popular Variety of Cat Litter

 kapush.net/cat-litter/silica-gel-cat-litter-problems/

Silica gel cat litter is often touted as harmless to humans and animals alike. However, some people use crushed silica gel to kill bed bugs and cockroaches, apparently! Regarding silica gel, the following excerpts might serve to illustrate exactly how harmless it really is as [cat litter](#).



We have been using “crystal” [cat litter](#) that is a silica gel for several months. It is far and away the best litter we’ve tried in terms of odor control and ease of use.

*However there is a **tremendous** amount of dust emanating from the stuff. It is so heavy, I fill the box by taking it outside, holding the bag several feet above the box, and pouring slowly so the dust blows off in the breeze. I hold my breath too. If by chance I breathe it, intense coughing is the result.*

I’ve also noticed a few times, that when the box is fresh, the cat will leave the box and wheeze a few times

That quote is from a real life user of *silica gel cat litter*.

(<http://www.mothing.com/community/t/794980/silica-dust-in-cat-litter-dangerous>)

And this one is from a case study on silica in cat litter and its effect on cats :

(<http://www.stuffweuse.com/Lungwash.html>)

Inhaled silica dust has been implicated as a cause of lung cancer and other respiratory diseases in humans and several animal species. Electron microscopy and x-ray spectroscopy were used to identify and characterize dust particles from seven brands of commercially available clay cat litters and to identify, characterize and quantify particles in the lung wash fluid of six cats with and six cats without signs of respiratory disease. Dust particles from clay cat litter have an identifiable appearance and elemental ratio (primarily aluminum and silica) and the same pattern was observed in particles obtained from lung wash fluid. Significantly more silica particles were obtained from cats with than without respiratory disease. This suggests an association between presence of silica particles and respiratory disease, but it is unknown whether silica dust particles contribute to respiratory disease or accumulate because of interference with normal lung ciliary function.

Silica Gel Crystal Cat Litter

Silica crystals are filled with millions of micro pores that absorb moisture. Silica dioxide (the type of sand found in quartz), when mixed with oxygen and water, turns into Silica Gel Crystals. The crystals are super absorbent and suck the moisture out of kitty poo. No wonder it is so popular amongst cat owners.

Sodium Bentonite is not the only cat-litter culprit. Clay is harmful if inhaled in dust form. Apart from that, in clay based clump cat litter, silicon constitutes most of the dust particles. That is not a healthy situation for either the human members of the household or the one with the paws using the litter.

The possible carcinogenic property of silica, and the disease **Silicosis** should not be taken lightly, either. The blue colour often found in silica gel cat litters that indicates that the litter is fresh (it turns pink upon absorption of moisture) is due to the presence of Cobalt Chloride. This, again, is 'possibly carcinogenic' to humans and definitely hazardous to aquatic life and to the environment in general. **Cobalt Chloride free Silica Gel** is being made available in the market for precisely that reason though not as cat litter.



Is Any Silica Gel Cat Litter Safe?

We're not sure, but in all fairness, we should mention the **Ultra Pet Silica Gel Cat Litter** which claims to use a vegetable dye instead of cobalt chloride, says the following about dust: " There may be a small amount of powder on the product, but generally the product is over 99% dust free. This is the result of pearls rubbing together during transport. Once you have opened the bag you shouldn't have any problems with dust—if you do please call us", and claims also to be relatively environment friendly: "70 percent less landfill contribution than clay litter". However, we would always recommend organic alternatives because they get the job done while being 100 percent eco-friendly.

If you wish to know about organic alternatives to silica gel litter, please read our post on **Organic Cat Litter**.

And if you are convinced by now that there is more to Silica Gel Cat Litter than meets the eye, **please click on the sharing buttons below to spread the word.**

RESOURCE/REFERENCE:

GREENMEDINFO.COM | TIPPEDEARCLAN.WORDPRESS.COM | EHOW.COM | MOTHERING.COM | STUFFWEUSE.COM | WIKIPAEDIA.ORG | COBALTCHLORIDE.NET | CONSERVATIONRESOURCES.COM
