

ABRASIVE BLASTING MANUFACTURERS ALLIANCE
STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO
NEW YORK TIMES

On June 5, the New York Times ran a story -- [*Under Trump, Worker Protections Are Viewed With New Skepticism*](#) -- that repeats some common misconceptions about OSHA's beryllium exposure rule. We seek to correct the record.

The Times article does not distinguish between beryllium alloy and the mineral form of beryllium, which is found in trace amounts in abrasive blasting. This is an important distinction. Exposure to beryllium alloy and other processed forms of beryllium have indeed been found to lead to illness in some cases. However, there have been no known cases of exposure to airborne beryllium in abrasive blasting leading to illness. Scientific studies suggest that these may be the result of several factors, one of which may be a different immune response triggered by processed beryllium, which may cause chronic beryllium disease, and other forms of beryllium, which may not. It is misleading to compare two very different forms of beryllium, and counterproductive to regulate them the same way.

The Times uses the tragic example of Vishwanauth Jailall to emphasize the link between beryllium alloy exposure and health problems. Mr. Jailall's case is unrelated to abrasive blasting. The Times' portrayal of Mr. Jailall confuses two very different chemical properties.

The article also mistakenly suggests the beryllium rule is focused on coal slag with regard to abrasive blasting. In reality, the OSHA rule impacts on all abrasive blasting due to the trace amounts of airborne beryllium produced by blasting materials and/or the coatings, surfaces and substrates being blasted.

The Abrasive Blasting Manufacturers Alliance will continue to advocate a sensible regulatory framework that considers all available scientific data and regulates beryllium based on the actual risk of worker exposure.

