

**For Immediate Release**

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## **ABMA Releases Comprehensive Abrasive Blasting Materials Content Study**

*Results Show that All Blasting Media Contain Beryllium Likely to Trigger New OSHA Testing Levels*

MARCH 22, 2018 – Today the Abrasive Blasting Manufacturers Alliance (ABMA) released the results of an independent chemical analysis of garnet, Starblast™ staurolite sand, glass and aluminum oxide used in abrasive blasting, finding that all of the abrasive blasting materials contain beryllium that will likely trigger new testing levels set by OSHA’s new beryllium rule. Detected beryllium in garnet samples ranged from 0.231 to 1.66 milligrams per kilogram (mg/kg), while beryllium was detected in Starblast™ staurolite sand, glass and aluminum oxide samples ranging from 0.431 to 13.6 mg/kg.

This study once again clearly demonstrates that all abrasive blasting will be impacted under the new OSHA permissible exposure limit (PEL) and short-term exposure limit (STEL) rules for beryllium, which are set to go into effect on May 11, 2018.

As a practical matter, the ABMA believes that these rules provide no additional tangible benefits for employee safety and health. During the rulemaking process, the ABMA continuously informed OSHA that the existing 27 rules and regulations for personal protective equipment (PPE) and workplace safety that were already in place provided the necessary protection for workers from airborne toxins. These existing protections are working, there has not been a single documented instance of beryllium related illness in the history of the abrasive blasting industry. Existing abrasive blasting operations should be able to meet the new PEL and STEL by using the same PPE and engineering controls that are currently in place to meet the prior PEL.

“The latest data further proves that OSHA’s unnecessary beryllium regulations impact the entire abrasive blasting industry, regardless of material used,” said the ABMA’s Mark Mummert.

These findings should put an end to the false claims and advertising that some abrasive manufacturers have deployed to mislead the public about the supposed benefits of their products over others. OSHA’s exposure rules are likely to be triggered no matter the abrasive used – and the impact on operations will be the same regardless of the blasting media companies buy. The ABMA believes that abrasive blasters should feel free to choose the abrasive that makes the most sense for their needs.

The ABMA continues to assert that these beryllium rules are a solution in search of a problem, which will heap additional costs on the abrasive industry and have been quietly imposed with no relevant data to justify them. The ABMA has called upon all abrasive producers – including glass, garnet, slag and sand – to recognize that OSHA’s Beryllium Rules will impact each of them equally and come together to

champion sensible regulations that ensure worker health and environmental protection while preserving abrasive blasters' freedom to operate.

The study findings and what the OSHA rules mean for the entire abrasive industry was a major discussion point during the JPCL Contractor Connect event on November 9, 2017 and will be presented as an upcoming webinar (link [here](#)) by PaintSquare on Wednesday, March 28, 2018; 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM ET.

**The latest ABMA study can be found [here](#) and a copy of the previously released glass study can be found [here](#).**

### **About the ABMA**

The ABMA is a coalition of companies in the abrasive blasting industry advocating for a regulatory framework based on sound scientific and public health data. We have come together as partners in the industry to champion sensible regulations that help ensure worker health and environmental protection while protecting the people who rely on the abrasive blasting industry for their livelihood from costly and unnecessary regulations.

Unfortunately, recent government regulations affecting our industry have been quietly imposed with no relevant data to justify them. Specifically, OSHA's new rules governing beryllium exposure were improperly and unnecessarily expanded to include the abrasive blasting industry without scientific justification. These beryllium rules are a solution in search of a problem, which will heap additional costs on abrasive blasters without providing any tangible benefits to employee safety and health. The ABMA stands united against them.