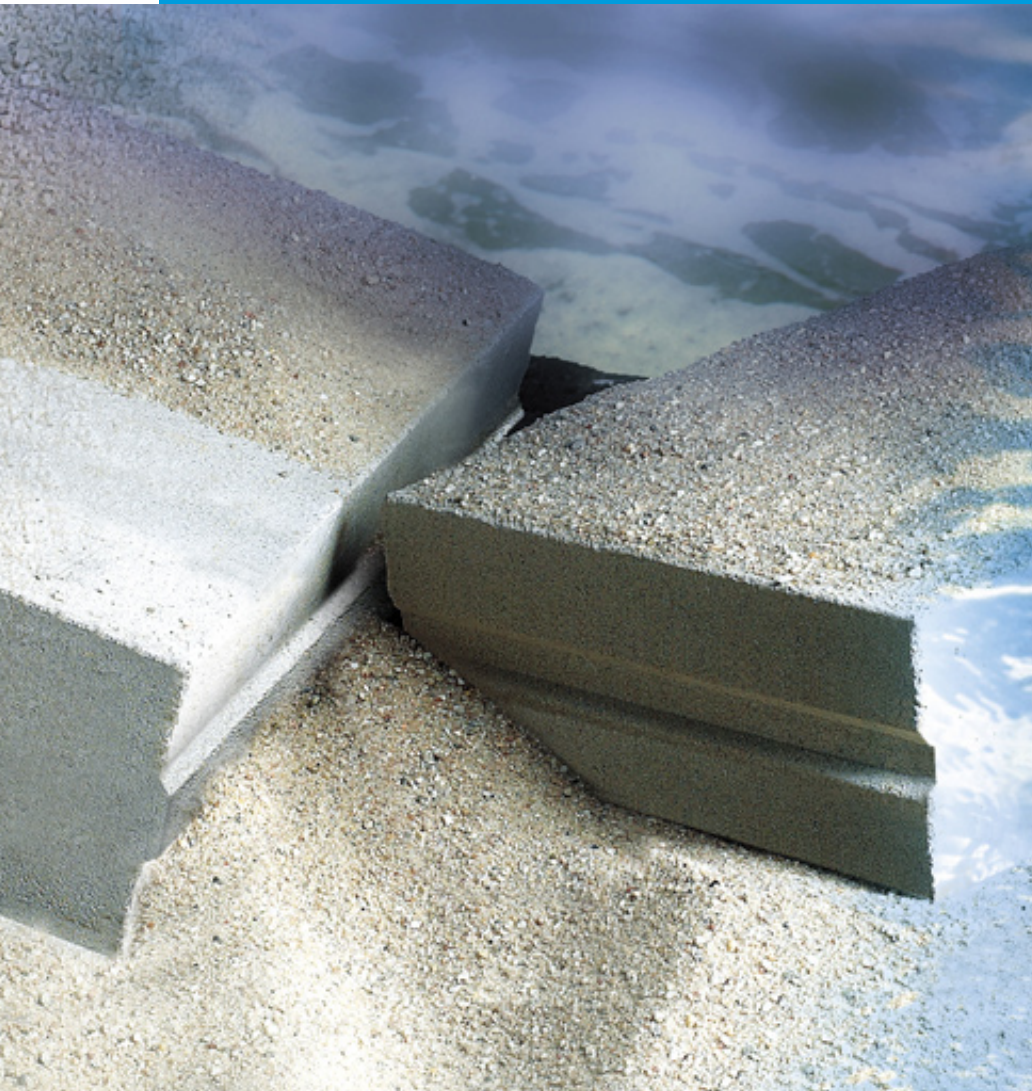


**silka**



# Health and safety data sheet for SILKA blocks & elements



**xella**



# Product health and safety for SILKA blocks & elements



## Authority

Issued under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Consumer Protection Act 1987 and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

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## Products

SILKA calcium silicate building blocks are hereafter described as 'SILKA blocks and elements' unless specifically described otherwise.

## Composition

SILKA blocks are manufactured from sand, granite, lime and water.

## Application

SILKA blocks are designed and manufactured in various densities, strengths and sizes. They are mainly used in the construction of interior and exterior walls, and are usually bonded together with thin joint mortar. SILKA blocks must be used strictly in accordance with

relevant British or European Standards and Building Regulations.

## Hazards identification

The products, within the meaning of the Health and Safety at Work Act, are inherently safe, but some hazards are identified thus:

- The comparatively sharp edges of SILKA blocks require care when handling manually, to avoid risks of cuts or abrasions.
- Wet blocks may exhibit alkalinity owing to the lime constituent and care should be taken when handling manually to avoid burns to the skin.
- The unit's weight and size should be taken into account when handling, to avoid dropping or strains when lifting. Large format elements may only be handled with appropriate lifting equipment.
- Silica dust from SILKA blocks can be harmful if inhaled or ingested and, as with any dust, may cause irritation to the respiratory and digestive tract.
- Plastic packaging materials are combustible and may constitute a fire hazard.

## First-aid measures

There are no specific requirements when using SILKA blocks or elements, other than the treatment of minor injuries. For example, treat dust in the mouth or eye by washing liberally with clean water. Where eye contact occurs, the area must be immediately and thoroughly irrigated using water or a suitable eyewash. Treat dust on the skin by washing liberally with soap and clean water.

In case of doubt, or when symptoms persist, medical advice must be sought.

## Fire-fighting measures

In the event of fire, SILKA blocks are not combustible. However, plastic shrinkwrapping, edging strips and timber pallets will burn if ignited. These materials will produce noxious fumes when burnt, and personnel should not be exposed to these. After a fire, packaged SILKA blocks may become unstable. They should not be lifted or moved under any circumstances until a competent person



has assessed the situation and permission to proceed has been granted.

#### Accident release measures

Not applicable.

#### Delivery, handling and storage

■ SILKA blocks and elements are generally delivered by road transport and are off-loaded mechanically. When lifted by grab, crane or fork truck, no personnel should be permitted beneath the load. When vehicles are offloading, any overhead power lines or cables should be isolated or otherwise adequately protected.

■ SILKA blocks and elements should always be stacked on a clean, firm, level base to avoid collapse. To prevent the risk of injury from loose blocks falling, avoid stacking packs of blocks above normal head height unless they are to be handled by mechanical methods.

■ Ensure suitable stack heights are maintained according to ground conditions – never stack packs more than three high.

■ Minimise manual handling by delivering units as close to the point of laying as safety considerations permit.

■ SILKA blocks are banded or wrapped, care should be taken when removing the banding to avoid injury from the band under tension, or any loose blocks falling when the banding or wrapping is released.

■ To avoid trips or falls, the block-laying work area should be clear of obstructions and properly organised.

#### Exposure controls/personal protection

During the processes of cutting, drilling or chasing SILKA blocks and elements, there is likely to be exposure to respirable dust. Workplace Exposure Limits should be determined in accordance with EH40, published by the Health and Safety Executive.

The normal protective clothing recommended for wear on building sites, e.g. safety footwear, head protection and gloves, is required. In addition, suitable goggles and dust masks conforming to the appropriate British or European Standard should be worn during the processes of cutting, chasing or drilling.

When working with light - coloured SILKA products in bright daylight conditions, glare may be experienced and it may be appropriate that suitable eye protection should be worn.

#### Physical and chemical properties

SILKA blocks and elements are inert when supplied. The main constituents are natural aggregates which contain silica and lime.

#### Stability and reactivity

Not applicable.



#### Toxicological information

Not applicable.

#### Ecological information

Not applicable.

#### Transportation information

SILKA blocks and elements are not subject to hazardous substance conveyance regulations, and vehicle and package labelling is not required.

#### Disposal considerations

All waste materials should be disposed of at a suitable licensed disposal facility, preferably by recycling or re-use. Advice on a preferred method should be obtained from the Environmental Agency (England and Wales) or the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

## **Other information**

Xella's technical staff are on hand to render assistance with written or telephone enquiries.

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