Pneumatic Tool Safety

Safety Meeting Packet

Extremely popular in the construction industry, pneumatic tools are hand tools powered by pressurized gas or air. In general, pneumatic-powered tools have a higher power-to-weight ratio than equivalent electric-powered tools, which allows workers to use the tools for longer time periods more comfortably. Compressed air forces the piston of the device to shift and allows the tool to operate. Typical examples of these tools include buffers and grinders, nail and staple guns, drills, jack hammers, sanders, and wrenches.

Hazardous Situations

There are several recognized hazards when working with pneumatic tools. The first and most common hazard is being struck by one of the tool's attachments or by the fastener that is being fired by the tool. Injuries may occur in the following situations:

- Attachments or fasteners are not properly secured
- The intended surface is missed
- Hoses fail or are accidentally disconnected
- Accidental tool activation

Air Hose

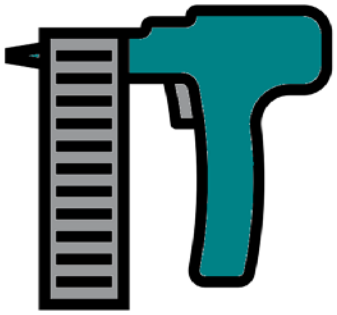
Air hoses should receive the same protection and care recommended for electrical cords. Like electrical cords, the air hose is subject to accidental striking or other damage committed by workers using the tool, or by others working near the tool. It also presents tripping hazards. A safety excess flow valve is required at the source of the air supply when the air hose diameter is greater than ½ inch. This is to reduce pressure and prevent injury in case of hose failure. Only hoses designed to resist abrasion, cutting, crushing, or failure should be used. Hoses must be inspected on a routine basis. A cut air hose can whip around violently until the air is shut off. Caution must be used to avoid injury when this happens.

Safety Clips

Use of a safety clip or retainer is required when the pneumatic tool has removable attachments. This is to prevent attachments from being ejected during tool operation.

Shooting Fasteners

Pneumatic tools that operate at pressures of more than 100 pounds per square inch and/or eject fasteners such as nails, rivets, or staples, must be outfitted with a special device to keep the fasteners from being shot, unless and until the muzzle is pressed against the work surface.



Spray Guns

Spray guns that are capable of atomizing paints and fluids at pressures of 1,000 pounds or more per square inch, must be equipped with an automatic or visible manual safety device that will prevent the trigger from being pulled until the safety device is manually released.

Protections

Eye protection is required for anyone working with pneumatic tools. It is recommended that head and face protection also be used. Physical barriers, such as screens, must be set up to protect surrounding areas from flying debris around staplers, chippers, riveting guns, and air drills.

Never point a compressed air gun toward anyone. Workers should never "dead-end" them against anyone, including themselves.

When using compressed air for cleaning, a chip guard must be in place to protect the surrounding area. Personal protective equipment (PPE) should be used to protect the worker from flying debris.

Use of heavy jackhammers can cause fatigue and strains on the arms and back of the worker. Heavy rubber grips can help reduce these effects by providing a secure handhold. When operating a jackhammer, workers must wear appropriate PPE such as safety glasses and safety shoes to protect them against injury, should the jackhammer or the worker slip or fall.

Noise is another hazard associated with pneumatic tools. Any one working with noisy tools such as jackhammers and nail guns, must use the effective hearing protection appropriate for the noise level and duration of the noise exposure.

Basic Tool Safety

With proper precaution and training, pneumatic tools can save time and energy. Remember these basic safety tips:

- Use the right tool for the job
- Do not operate the tool at a pressure above the manufacturer's rating
- Wear eye, ear, and foot protection
- Ensure the air supply is clean and dry
- Keep tools clean and well maintained
- Disconnect tools when not in use or before being serviced
- Make sure the tool is attached properly and securely to the hose

Safety of Air Hoses

The pneumatic tool is only as safe as the air supply hose.

Hose safety checklist:

- If an air hose is larger than ½ inch in diameter, ensure there is a safety excess flow valve at the air supply.
- Keep hoses away from heat and sharp edges.
- Check hoses for damage, replace if needed.
- Bleed off air pressure before disconnecting.
- Do not carry tool by its hose.
- Turn off air pressure when not in use or recharging.
- Avoid creating trip hazards with hose placement.

For additional information regarding pneumatic tool safety, please consult the following:

- OSHA Standard: 29 CFR 1926.302 - Power-operated Hand Tools
- OSHA Publication 3080 – Hand and Power Tools (Revised 2002)

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Safety Meeting Attendance Acknowledgement

Company Name _____

Department / Division _____

Meeting Date & Time _____ _____ ☐ AM ☐ PM

Meeting Location _____

Name & Title of Individual Conducting Meeting _____

Key Meeting Discussion Points / Important Reminders:

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Internal Procedures Reviewed:

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By signing this document, you confirm your attendance at the meeting and acknowledge the issues addressed above!

Employees in Attendance		
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Employees Not Present: _____

Suggestions/Recommendations to Improve Workplace Safety and Health: _____

Actions Taken: _____

Manager/Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Disclaimer:

The information provided above was assembled using multiple resources. However, these materials do not contain ALL the information available regarding the required safety standards under local, provincial, state, or federal law for your industry.