

## Pneumatic Tools

### Handout

Pneumatic tools are powered by compressed air and include nailers, drills, hammers, and sanders. They are dangerous because the tools are under pressure and can come apart. When this occurs, there is the danger of a “flying missile” striking you or other workers. It is important that you inspect your pneumatic tools daily and keep them in good working order. You must also wear eye protection. Head and face protection is recommended. Wear appropriate hearing protection when working with noisy tools, such as jackhammers. When required, you should set up screens to protect nearby workers from being struck by flying fragments from chippers, riveting guns, staplers, or air drills.

When you use pneumatic tools, you must:

- Never point compressed air guns at anyone.
- Check the pneumatic tools to make sure they are fastened securely to the air supply hose to prevent them from becoming disconnected. A short wire or positive locking device must attach the air hose to the tool. This will serve as an added safeguard to prevent “whiplash” if the hose becomes disconnected.
- Make sure a safety clip or retainer is installed to prevent attachments, such as chisels on a chipping hammer, from being ejected during tool operation.
- If the air hose is more than 1/2 inch in diameter, there should be a safety excess flow valve installed at the air supply source. This will reduce pressure in case of hose failure.
- Take precautions to protect your air hose from physical damage. The hose can be easily damaged.
- Check pneumatic tools that shoot nails, rivets, staples, or similar fasteners, and operate at pressures more than 100 pounds per square inch to make sure they are equipped with a special device to keep fasteners from being ejected, unless the muzzle is pressed against the work surface.
- Check airless spray guns (the kind that atomize paints and fluids at pressures of 1,000 pounds or more per square inch) to make sure they have automatic or visible manual safety devices. These devices will prevent pulling the trigger until the safety device is manually released.
- Don’t use compressed air for cleaning, unless the pressure is reduced to less than 30 pounds per square inch, and then only with effective chip guarding and personal protective equipment.
- When you are using a jackhammer, wear safety glasses and safety shoes. These items will protect you against injury if the jackhammer slips or falls. Use a face shield too.

