

WORKING SAFELY WHEN CLEANING WITH COMPRESSED AIR

COMPRESSED AIR FACTS

- Compressed air used for cleaning in the workplace can be very dangerous if the necessary precautions are not taken.
- The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standard 29 CFR 1910.242 (b) requires that the nozzle pressure of an air gun used for cleaning purposes remain below 30 pounds per square inch (psi) for all static conditions.
- In the workplace, pressure to air guns can range from 55 to 160 psi.



Safety
Nozzle



Non-Safety
Nozzle

HAZARDS OF COMPRESSED AIR

- High-pressure injection of particles or liquids may damage eyes or skin.
- Compressed air entering the bloodstream through a break in the skin or through a body opening can create an air bubble (embolism), which is a dangerous (and potentially deadly) medical condition.
- Excessive noise may cause hearing loss and rupture eardrums.
- Dangling hoses can present a trip hazard.

SAFE WORK PRACTICES

- Ensure all hoses and components are appropriately rated to handle the supplied pressure from the compressor.
- ALWAYS use the lowest pressure that will do the job.
- ALWAYS use a gun or similar device with an OSHA compliant, pressure reducing nozzle if the pressure of your compressed air is greater than 29 psi.
- When there is a risk for particulate exposure, ALWAYS wear goggles or a face shield over safety glasses to protect the eyes.
- Use a noise reducing air gun and wear hearing protection when peak noise levels are greater than 85 decibels.
- WEAR the appropriate gloves to protect your hands.
- NEVER use compressed air to clean your clothes or body.
- NEVER tamper with air guns to modify them in any way.
- NEVER point an air gun or direct air towards another individual or your skin.
- Call OESO at 684-5996 with questions.

