

Topic: Compressed Air

Compressed air has many useful applications in today's workplace. It is used across a wide variety of industries. It is used to power tools such as nail guns paint sprayers, impact wrenches and many more. It can also be used to power machinery.

Compressed air stores energy at high pressure and therefore it must be handled with care. Improper use can lead to serious injury and even death.

A strong blast of air can dislodge an eye socket or rupture an eardrum. Air blown into the mouth can cause esophogus or lung damage. Flying debris can also cause serious damage. Air forced into the blood stream can cause an embolism which if it reaches the heart causes symptoms similar to a heart attack or if it reaches the brain can cause a stroke.

Here are some steps you can take to reduce your risk of injury.

ALWAYS – Wear the proper personal protective equipment (PPE). This may include gloves to protect your hands or eye and face protection. In some cases it may also include hearing protection.

ALWAYS – Follow safety precautions and proper operating procedure for the tool being powered by the air.

ALWAYS – Examine the tool, the connections and the hose before turning on the air. Fix any problems before using.

ALWAYS – De-energize the equipment by turning off the air supply and bleeding the air out of the line and tool before disconnecting the hose or tool.

ALWAYS – Keep the air hose off the floor whenever possible where they can be a tripping hazard or be subject to damage from dropped tools, vehicles, doors or other hazards.

NEVER - Point the tool or air nozzle at yourself or another person.

NEVER – kink the hose to try to control the air flow.

NEVER - use the hose to clean your clothes or machinery.

Conclusion

Compressed air can make many tasks in the workplace easier by saving time and labour. It must be used with the proper safeguards and precautions.