

SAFETY MEETING TOPIC: Power Tool Safety

PNEUMATIC TOOLS

Pneumatic tools are powered by compressed air and include chippers, drills, hammers, and sanders.

There are several dangers encountered in the use of pneumatic tools.

- The main one is the danger of getting hit by one of the tool's attachments or by some kind of fastener the worker is using with the tool. Eye protection is required and face protection is recommended for employees working with pneumatic tools.
- Noise is another hazard. Working with noisy tools such as air grinders requires proper, effective use of hearing protection.
- When using pneumatic tools, employees must check to see that they are fastened securely to the hose to prevent them from becoming disconnected. A short wire or positive locking device attaching the air hose to the tool will serve as an added safeguard.
- In some cases, screens may be set up to protect nearby workers from being struck by flying fragments around chippers, riveting guns, staplers, or air drills.
- Compressed air guns should never be pointed toward anyone. Users should never "dead-end" it against themselves or anyone else.

HYDRAULIC POWER TOOLS

The fluid used in hydraulic power tools must be an approved fire-resistant fluid and must retain its operating characteristics at the most extreme temperatures to which it will be exposed. The manufacturer's recommended safe operating pressure for hoses, valves, pipes, filters, and other fittings must not be exceeded.

JACKS

All jacks - lever and ratchet jacks, screw jacks, and hydraulic jacks - must have a device that stops them from jacking up too high. Also, the manufacturer's load limit must be permanently marked in a prominent place on the jack and should not be exceeded. A jack should never be used to support a lifted load. Once the load has been lifted, it must immediately be blocked up.

Use wooden blocking under the base if necessary to make the jack level and secure. If the lift surface is metal, place a 1-inch-thick hardwood block or equivalent between it and the metal jack head to reduce the danger of slippage.

To set up a jack, make certain of the following:

- the base rests on a firm level surface,
- the jack is correctly centered,
- the jack head bears against a level surface, and
- the lift force is applied evenly

Proper maintenance of jacks is essential for safety. All jacks must be inspected before each use and lubricated regularly. If a jack is subjected to an abnormal load or shock, it should be thoroughly examined to make sure it has not been damaged. Hydraulic jacks exposed to freezing temperatures must be filled with an adequate antifreeze liquid.

GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Employees who use hand and power tools and who are exposed to the hazards of falling, flying, abrasive and splashing objects, or exposed to harmful dusts, fumes, mists, vapors, or gases must be provided with the particular personal equipment necessary to protect them from the hazard.

All hazards involved in the use of power tools can be prevented by following five basic safety rules:

- Keep all tools in good condition with regular maintenance.
- Use the right tool for the job.
- Examine each tool for damage before use.
- Operate according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Provide and use the proper protective equipment.

Employees and employers have a responsibility to work together to establish safe working procedures. If a hazardous situation is encountered, it should be brought to the attention of the proper individual immediately.

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