

Compressed Air Safety

Refer to sign-in sheet for attendees (note: a separate meeting should be held with all absent employees).

1. Overview:

Compressed air as its name implies is gas under pressure. If used improperly, compressed air poses several hazards and can even cause death.

2. Precautions:

There are several guidelines to follow before grabbing an air hose:

- Compressed air lines should be marked to identify its contents and pressure rating (pounds per square inch or psi).
- Before connecting to a pipeline, verify its contents.
- Compressed air pipelines including fittings, connectors, pressure regulators and hoses must be rated for maximum pressure of the supply compressor.
- Supply shutoff valves should be located (as nearly as possible) to the point of operation.
- Hoses should be kept clean and free of grease and oil to prevent hose deterioration.
- Hoses should not be strung across floors or aisles where they may cause people to trip and fall or be damaged by mobile equipment. When possible, air supply hoses should be suspended overhead or otherwise located to afford efficient access and protection against damage.
- Hose ends must be secured to prevent whipping if an accidental cut or break occurs.
- Pneumatic-impact tools, such as riveting guns, should never be pointed at a person.
- Before a pneumatic tool is disconnected, unless it has quick-disconnect plugs, the air supply must be turned off at the control valve and the tool should be bled.
- **Never** use compressed air for cleaning your clothing or skin. This has the potential to cause a serious injury and even death, for example an air embolism.
- Compressed air can blow materials into the eye or cause other serious eye injuries.
- Use water or vacuum for cleaning stone dust. In situations where water or vacuum are not available and compressed air is used for cleaning, the pressure should be regulated to 15 psi unless equipped with properly engineered diffuser nozzles.
- Static electricity can be generated through the use of pneumatic tools. This type of equipment must be grounded or bonded if it is used where fuel, flammable vapors or explosive atmospheres are present.
- Compressed air is expensive to generate, so pneumatic equipment should be shutoff when not in use and system leaks should be immediately repaired.
- Compressed air system components including piping, valves, accumulators, regulators, hoses and attachments must be properly engineered and rated for use with compressed air.
- Compressed air system components must be frequently inspected to ensure their integrity. Hoses, connector and attachments should be inspected prior to each use.

3. Discussion:

- Review your company policy on compressed air safety.
- Who is responsible for compressed air safety?
- Identify areas for improvement in using compressed air.

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4. RECAP/REVIEW:

- When should check a hose for cuts, kinks, nicks or other deterioration?
- What do you need to do before disconnecting an air tool (unless it has quick-disconnect plugs)?
- When is it OK to dust off your body or clothing with air?

5. Reminder:

- Safety is the responsibility of both management and employees!

Next Safety Meeting is scheduled for _____ and the topic will be _____.

Take Exam / Review Results

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