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Compressed Air Safety

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Compressed air is often misjudged and not recognized as a hazard because people often think of air as harmless. **CAUTION: SERIOUS INJURY MAY OCCUR!**

Did you know...

- Air forced into body tissues through the skin can cause an air embolism (air bubbles in the blood stream) which can be fatal if it reaches the heart, lungs, or brain.
- Inflation injuries of the intestine can be caused by air being directed at private body areas. A worker in the U.K. died of injuries sustained through horseplay with a compressed air hose. This act of horseplay can be deadly!
- Air blown into the mouth at only 5 PSI can rupture the esophagus or the lungs.
- Eye and ear injuries can occur from a blast of air or flying particles. These types of eye and ear injuries can cause partial or total loss of sight or hearing.
- The sound from a compressed air hose can reach 120-130 dB which is well above OSHA's 90 dB permissible exposure limit.
- 40 PSI can blow out an ear drum from 4 inches away and possibly cause brain damage.
- As little as 12 PSI can blow an eye out of its socket!
- Flying particles can cause cuts and bruises to any part of the body.

REMEMBER –

- Hoses and lines should be rated to meet the maximum operating pressure of the equipment
- Always wear proper Personal Protective Equipment:

- Safety glasses with side shields and a face shield if needed
 - Hearing protection
 - Respiratory protection, depending on the material(s) being worked with
 - Normal work clothing is not protection against compressed air
 - If you must clean with compressed air, do not use air that is set above 30 PSI. You must also have effective chip guarding and proper PPE (OSHA standard 1910.242(b))
 - NEVER USE COMPRESSED AIR TO CLEAN CLOTHING OR HAIR!
 - NEVER POINT COMPRESSED AIR AT YOURSELF OR ANOTHER PERSON!
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_____ with the following employees: