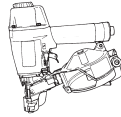


# Pneumatic Nail Gun Safety



Cherie Berry, Commissioner of Labor

## Safety Tips

One of the most popular tools used in construction, nail guns drive nails and staples into building materials. Unfortunately the tool does not distinguish between human flesh or other body parts and building materials or structures when triggered. Improper use can result in injuries or fatalities. More than 37,000 people are treated for unintentional nail gun injuries each year in emergency rooms, according to data from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

## Hazards

The operator and co-workers are at risk. Eyes, hands and fingers are especially at risk. Nails can:

- ♦ Splinter or blow out fragments from the material.
- ♦ Puncture the back of the material.
- ♦ Fire completely through the material and strike workers behind the nailing surface.
- ♦ Pose contact hazards, such as nails striking electrical wires.

## Common Tool Types

Sequential tools: Require nose (work-piece contact) to be depressed before the trigger is pulled.

- ♦ Two-step sequence makes accidental firing less likely.
- ♦ Can be used for most nailing tasks.

Contact tools: Tool fires anytime the trigger and nose (work-piece contact) are both depressed.

- ♦ Trigger can be held down to allow “bump firing.”
- ♦ Use for nailing on flat surfaces.

## CAUTION:

- ♦ If trigger is depressed, the tool will fire anytime the nose is depressed; can also cause unwanted double firing of nails.

## Safe Work Practices and PPE

- ♦ Follow manufacturer's tool labels and operating manual.
- ♦ Use only compressed air to power the tool, not bottled gas. Do not exceed the manufacturer's specified air pressure for the tool.
- ♦ Wear safety glasses with side shields.
- ♦ Never defeat or modify safety features.
- ♦ Keep fingers away from trigger when not driving nails.
- ♦ Sequential tools have reduced risk of accidental and double firing.
- ♦ Avoid line of fire hazards in front of and behind material; position yourself (especially your free hand) out of the line of fire. Never point nail gun at anyone. Watch for co-workers behind the nailing surface.
- ♦ Exercise extreme caution when using an air tool around another worker.
- ♦ Disconnect the gun to perform maintenance, move to another work area or clear jams.
- ♦ Train on safe operating procedures, proper body placement and correct PPE use.
- ♦ **NOTE:** The tool must meet applicable OSHA guarding standards.

*Adapted from OSHA Quick Card 3363-4-09, U.S. Department of Labor.*

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