

Worksite: _____ Instructor: _____ Date/Time: _____

Topic C185: Pneumatic Staplers & Nailers

Introduction: Commonly referred to as “nail-guns” or “staple-guns”, you can find an “air gun” for any fastening application imaginable! Pneumatic nailers and staplers are used by carpenters and roofers on virtually any jobsite. These “air guns” are very popular because they increase job production dramatically and are much preferred to swinging a hammer. However, it is important to note that the equipment is expensive and can be dangerous if used carelessly or foolishly.

The nails and staples are generally strip or coil fed. Framing guns can shoot 18d nails and “brad” or “pin” nailers can shoot thin 18 gauge fasteners for fine finish work. What they all have in common is they all normally operate on about 90psi of compressed air, which means an air compressor and air hoses are involved.

On all guns manufactured in the last several years, two mechanisms need to be triggered in order for the gun to cycle; first the nose of the gun must be pressed in contact with the work-piece, second the trigger switch must be pulled. When these conditions are satisfied, the tool cycles and the fastening device being used is “shot” from the nose of the tool with extreme force and at a very high rate of speed. These tools are not to be treated like toys (i.e. shooting at birds, cans, or each other). Most “air gun” related injuries occur as the result of the tool’s safety features being disabled or protective eyewear not being used.

Follow these basic safety precautions while operating pneumatic nailers and staplers:

- Never allow anyone to operate these tools without first being properly instructed in their safe use
- Avoid horseplay when using “air guns”. Accidentally discharged fasteners can easily penetrate flesh and bone.
- Safety features should be left intact or you could nail your foot to the deck—it does happen.
- Always wear appropriate eye protection when using any air gun.
- Hearing protection is often required depending on the noise level.
- Read the owner’s manual and operate the tool according to manufacturer’s guidelines.
- Ensure that tools are properly maintained and are in good working condition.
- Never exceed manufacturer’s recommended working pressures and never use more pressure than necessary (seldom more than 90 – 95 psi). Excessive pressure exerts more force, causing harder cycles.
- Always keep the nose of the tool pointed toward the work-piece or downward when air charged.
- Never point the tool towards yourself or others.
- During use, hold the nose of the gun firmly against the work-piece.
- Ensure all safety features are intact and operational. Make sure they are not disabled and are functioning properly.
- Always disconnect tool from air supply when clearing a jam or when not in use.
- Never carry an air-gun with your finger on the trigger. Accidental discharge and injury may result.
- Tie-off and secure the air hose when working on a roof or scaffold to prevent the tool from falling on others.
- Always move forward when working a nailer or stapler on a roof so you do not inadvertently trip or fall from the roof.
- Never use volatile bottled gas to operate pneumatic fasteners or air guns around flammables; sparks may cause a fire.
- Keep your free hand clear of air gun’s nose during use.

Always keep the nose of the tool pointed towards the work-piece of downward when air charged.

Conclusion: In the hands of a competent craftsman, air nailers and staplers will substantially speed up production and increase profits. However, never underestimate the power of these tools as it could lead to injury. If using an “air gun” at home, never leave a charged tool unattended; beware of curious, inquisitive children. Follow these guidelines for safe pneumatic nailer and stapler operations.

Employee Attendance: (Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)

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These guidelines do not supersede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.