



# HAZARD ALERT

## Safe Use of Pneumatic Nail Guns

Nail gun incidents injure thousands of workers every year. Six serious nail gun-related incidents have occurred in Manitoba over the past year. And in Nunavut, a construction worker using a nail gun died after a nail penetrated his skull. Nail guns are useful and popular tools for fastening materials quickly and efficiently, but they must be used properly or they become deadly, loaded weapons.

### Prevention measures

For every workplace in which a machine or tool is used, the employer must develop and implement Safe Work Procedures, as outlined in *Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Regulation – Part 16*. SAFE Work Manitoba reminds employers that they must:

- develop and implement (preferably written) Safe Work Procedures for the pneumatic nail gun
- ensure all workers who use the pneumatic nail gun are trained in the Safe Work Procedures
- make sure all workers comply with the Safe Work Procedures.

### Quick tips:

- Ensure only trained, experienced workers use the nail gun.
- Inspect before connecting to air supply, making sure:
  - the airline and all fittings are working and free from tangles and leaks
  - safety mechanisms and trigger are moving freely, and all retaining screws are secure
  - nail cartridge is free from blockage.
- Be familiar with the nail gun manufacturer's safe operating instructions for use, handling & storage.
- Wear all appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including safety glasses with side shields, hearing protection and safety footwear.
- Keep free hand clear of the discharge area while firing.
- Disengage finger from trigger when not firing. Only pull trigger when nose piece is directed onto a safe work surface.
- Do not overreach when using the tool.
- Never point a nail gun at another person. Treat the tool like a firearm and assume it is loaded.
- If there is a blockage or a maintenance issue, disconnect the tool from its air supply and ensure air is exhausted before working on the tool.
- When finished, disconnect air supply. Do not leave tool unattended and attached to the air supply.
- Remove all nails and fasteners when finished, and return the gun to its proper storage space.
- For additional measures, review: [Bulletin No. 249 – SAFE Work Procedures](#).

