



Nailing Down the Need for Nail Gun Safety

Nail guns are a tool used by both construction workers and in homes to make building go faster, this increased productivity introduces new injury risks (or risk factors). Knowing the hazards of nail guns and how to use them more safely can prevent injury at your job site or during your next building project.

The Reality

Nail guns are powerful, easy to operate, and boost productivity for nailing tasks. They are also responsible for an estimated 37,000 emergency room visits each year – 68% of these involve workers and 32% involve consumers. Severe nail gun injuries have led to construction worker deaths. Fortunately, these injuries can be prevented, and more and more contractors are making changes to improve nail gun safety. Research shows that risk of injury is twice as high using “contact” trigger nail guns compared to “sequential” trigger nail guns.

How Do Nail Gun Injuries Happen?

There are seven major risk factors that can lead to nail gun injury. Understanding them will help you to prevent injuries on your job sites.

- Unintended nail discharge from double fire
- Unintended nail discharge from knocking the safety contact with the trigger squeezed
- Nail penetration through lumber work piece
- Nail ricochet after striking a hard surface or metal feature
- Missing the work piece
- Awkward position nailing
- Bypassing safety mechanisms

Safety Tips to Prevent Injuries:

- Read the user’s manual to learn how to operate and maintain the tool safely.
- Get training at work.
- Examine the tool before use, making sure it is in good condition. Is the nose guard in working order? Also check the air pressure before hooking it up.
- Do not carry the tool by the hose.
- Do not carry the tool with a finger on the trigger.
- Do not press the trigger unless you are intending to fire.

- Do not point the tool at anyone. Even if the tool is disconnected from the air supply or supposedly empty, it could still fire under certain circumstances. It is also possible for a nail gun to go off without you touching the trigger.
- Make sure the tool is pointed away from your body and keep your hands out of the way.
- Nails hitting the work at the wrong angle and bouncing off can injure hands.
- Put the muzzle of the tool firmly against the work piece when firing.
- Disconnect the tool from the air supply before clearing blockages, making adjustments, handing the tool to another worker or leaving it unattended.
- Always wear safety glasses when using an air nailer. Hearing protection, head protection and safety-toed footwear might also be required.

SAFETY MEETING ATTENDANCE RECORD

DATE _____

DISCUSSION LEADER _____

LOCATION _____

SAFETY TOPIC(S) _____

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