

SAFE WORK

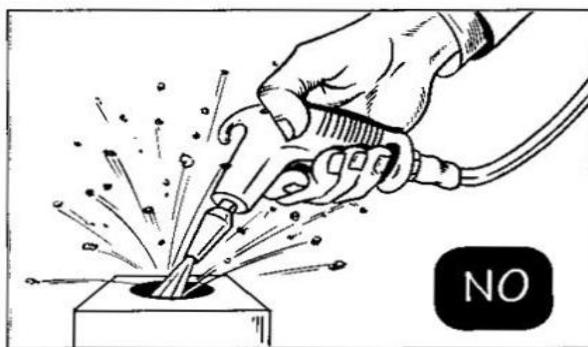
S SPOT THE HAZARD
A ASSESS THE RISK
F FIND A SAFER WAY
E EVERYDAY

No. 150
May 2009

Cleaning With Compressed Air

Potential Hazard:

Cleaning materials and equipment with compressed air is dangerous. The most common injuries are caused by materials and particles (wood chips, dust, metal and plastic filings, etc.) being blown into the eyes. Most importantly: **NEVER DIRECT COMPRESSED AIR TOWARDS YOURSELF OR OTHERS.** Death can result when a compressed airstream is directed towards the skin and air enters the bloodstream through a break in the skin, or when air enters a body opening.



Blowing WITHOUT chip guard



Blowing WITH chip guard

How to Control the Hazard:

The best way to control this hazard is to find a different, safe way of cleaning materials or equipment, like using a brush or vacuum.

If compressed air is the **only option available for cleaning**, workers must be trained to follow **safe work procedures** and wear **personal protective equipment (PPE)** as outlined below:

- Always use the lowest possible pressure for the task. Nozzle pressure should remain below 207kPa (30 psi). You will need to use a pressure reducing device or internally regulated nozzle for this.
- Use protective guards on the nozzle or other methods of guarding to keep particles from blowing back towards the worker, such as manufactured extension tubes or injection exhausts and particle collection bags.
- Wear personal protective clothing, including full body coveralls, hand protection, face shields or safety eyewear and hearing protection when working with compressed air.
- Ensure other workers in the area are protected from exposure to the airstream and any airborne materials or particles. Physical barriers or screens may be needed.

Reference to legal requirements under workplace safety and health legislation:

- Machines, Tools and Robots: Manitoba Regulation 217/2006 Part 16

Additional workplace safety and health information available at www.safemanitoba.com

Workplace Safety and Health Division Contact Information:

Winnipeg: (204) 945-3446
Toll-Free: 1-866-888-8186 (Manitoba only)
24-Hour Emergency Line: (204) 945-0581

Publications/resources available at: www.safemanitoba.com

