



SafetyAlert

We're Serious About Safety

Pneumatic Nail and Staple Gun Safety

Pneumatic fastening tools are powered by compressed air and primarily include staplers and nailers. Unfortunately, injuries associated with nail guns are rapidly increasing. Recent U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health data indicates that about 37,000 people go to emergency rooms every year with injuries from nail guns.

Because of the dangerous nature of these tools, it is important to know more about them. The facts contained in this Safety Alert will give you basic information, good work practices, and helpful resources to prevent injuries.

General Safety Guidelines

- Review the owner's manual carefully with all operators.
- Observe each employee demonstrating safe operating procedures.
- Always wear safety glasses.
- Do not touch the trigger unless firing the tool against a work piece.
- Use extreme caution when using an air tool around other workers.
- Never point the tool at anyone. Treat the tool like a firearm and assume it's loaded.
- Disconnect the air hose before clearing a jam or making adjustments.
- Use manufacturer's specified pressures for the tool.
- Keep your free hand safely out of the way of the tool.
- Secure the hose when working on scaffolding to prevent the weight of the hose from dragging the tool off the scaffold if you set the tool down.



Nail and staple gun specifications on the reverse side.



Beacon Mutual offers a variety of training opportunities for employees, supervisors and managers. Please check our seminar schedule for more information.
www.beaconmutual.com

Trigger Selection

Sequential mode and bump mode are the two basic trigger mechanisms used in pneumatic nailers and staplers. It is important to understand the differences between the two triggers in order to prevent injuries. To find out whether your nail gun is a sequential trigger or bump trigger model, fire a nail as usual and keep the trigger depressed. Lift the nail gun and carefully press its nose against the work surface again. If the gun fires a second nail, you have a bump trigger model. If the gun doesn't fire, you have the safer sequential trigger model.

Sequential Mode Trigger

In the sequential mode, also known as a restrictive trigger or operating in the trigger fire mode, you must first press the nail gun firmly against the work piece and then press the trigger. One nail is fired and you must release the trigger before you can begin the next nailing cycle.

Advantages: Use this mode for intermittent nailing where you need accurate placement, such as framing, cabinetry, and carpentry tasks. It will reduce the possibility of driving an unwanted nail or staple (double fire) if you accidentally bump the safety element against yourself or others. It also reduces the speed of operation compared to the bump trigger mode.

Cautions: Ricochet accidents can occur if you nail into another nail, the surface is too hard, or the tool is at an angle. Work with a nail gun only from a sturdy and stable surface. Do not press your finger on the trigger unless you're ready to fire, especially when climbing ladders.



Bump Mode Trigger

In the bump mode trigger, also known as dual action, bottom fire, or contact trip, you must press the trigger before you bring the nail gun into contact with the work piece. Each time you press the nailer against the work piece, a nail is fired and a nailing cycle begins. You must keep the trigger pulled while moving the tool along the work surface with a bouncing motion, depressing the safety element where you want to drive a nail or staple. By repeatedly "bumping" the nail gun against the work piece, you can rapidly fire any number of nails.

Advantages: Use the bump action trigger for high-production jobs. Use for rapid nailing on flat, stationary surfaces such as decking, sheathing, and siding. This mode is very fast and can reduce the risk of musculoskeletal disorders such as trigger finger.

Cautions: The bump mode is less precise than the sequential mode and can be more dangerous. It can result in driving unwanted nails or staples because of a double fire, rebound, recoil, or leaving your finger on the trigger and bumping yourself or a co-worker.

Additional Resources

ANSI SNT-101-2002 Standard
www.ansi.org

**The International Staple, Nail
and Tool Association (ISANTA)**
512 West Burlington Ave., Suite 203
La Grange, IL 60525-2245
708-482-8138
www.isanta.org



Beacon Mutual offers a variety of training opportunities for employees, supervisors and managers. Please check our seminar schedule for more information.
www.beaconmutual.com

This material is being provided to you as a service of The Beacon Mutual Insurance Company for information purposes only and is not intended, nor shall it be relied upon, as a comprehensive statement of all possible work-related hazards to your employees or of the federal, state or local laws and regulations which may be applicable to your business. It is your responsibility to develop and implement your loss prevention policies. You should direct questions concerning specific situations to informed and appropriate advisors.