

Safe Work Instruction	Issue date: 07/04/08
Portable Air Compressors	Review date 05/03/11

Document no. SMS-06-SW-0481	Work description Use of portable air compressors		
	Scope Applies to all types of portable air compressors		
Review date	References OHS Reg 2001 Chapter 5 SMS-06-GD-0225 Plant SMS-06-GD-0403 Plant Risk Assessment		
Responsible supervisor <i>Insert name in BLOCK letters</i>	PPE and precautions	Competencies or qualifications	Licences or permits required
LINE MANAGER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safety glasses Hearing protection – (Large compressors) everyone must wear hearing protection within 5 metres of the air compressor Long sleeved shirt – Make sure you have no loose clothing that can be caught on the compressor Safety boots Hard Hat (when within rail corridor) Hi Vis Vest (when within rail corridor) 	Trained and competent in the use of the specific Portable Air Compressors Backsafe instruction	N/A
Tools and equipment required			
Portable air compressor			
IF CONTROL MEASURES ARE NOT SUITABLE AND MAJOR CHANGES ARE NEEDED, CONDUCT A RISK ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOP NEW CONTROLS ACCORDING TO SMS-06-PR-0104 WORKPLACE RISK MANAGEMENT .			



Warning

Don't smoke when using or fuelling the air compressor.

High pressure air can seriously injure personnel therefore ensure you always wear eye and hearing protection (with the use of large compressors only) as well as protective clothing.

Never point air at yourself or others - it can cause air bubbles to enter the bloodstream through the skin which can cause death,

Use only approved lubricants when servicing fittings. The use of oil or other hydrocarbons on fittings poses a significant fire risk.

To minimise the spread of dust never use compressed air to clean your clothes or other objects. Use manual cleaning with a vacuum or brush instead.

Site / job Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place the first aid kit and fire fighting gear nearby Follow all worksite procedures, eg. induction, Pre-Work Brief. Conduct your own hazard assessment – consider the job, the environment and the weather (eg. fire risks are higher near long grass or in hot, dry or windy weather). Make sure that the compressor is within range – the air hoses must be able to reach the work areas. The air hoses must stay within your own work area and must be clear of any walkways or site traffic areas. Special ventilation is needed in confined spaces and tunnels – poisonous Carbon Monoxide can build up if the correct precautions are not taken. Ensure the compressor is within its maintenance schedule dates before use. Always lock wheels on base of compressor to prevent movement.
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Portable Air Compressors

Refuelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turn off the compressor before fuelling. • Mix fuels according to the Manufacturer's Instructions – make sure that you have good ventilation when refuelling or mixing fuels. • Remove the fuel cap carefully – pressure can build up in the tank. • NEVER start the compressor if there is fuel spilt on it or if there is a leak in the fuel system. • Change clothes before starting if there is fuel on them. • Only use the correct fuel for the compressor – it should be marked COMPRESSOR FUEL and kept in an open area away from possible sources of flames or sparks.
Pre-operational checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check that the compressor is switched off and disconnected from any air tools before doing any maintenance. • Check that the air hoses are securely connected with clips to the air compressor and the air tools. • Check the compressor and hoses for damage. • Don't use if damaged. Replace the hose or tag the compressor and repair ASAP. • On electrically powered models inspect all leads and plugs for condition and serviceability; never use a compressor with a faulty lead.
Setting up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the work area is clear. • Lift the compressor into position using a hi-ab or crane. Trailer or trolley mounted air compressors can be towed to site using an appropriate vehicle. • Check that the air hoses are secure at both ends and not kinked. • Check that the air hoses are not a trip hazard. • Position the compressor wherever possible to minimise the noise hazard to personnel.
Starting the air compressor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the Manufacturer's Instructions for the model you are using if you are unfamiliar with it – there may be safety critical differences to the one you are used to • Start and stop the compressor according to the Manufacturer's Instructions • When starting the compressor observe the operation of pressure gauges and cut in and cut out pressures are correct.
Using Compressed Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check the operation of the compressor at regular intervals when it is in use. • Adjust the air pressure to suit your work needs avoiding the use of excessive air pressures when possible. • Relieve air pressure from the compressor before removing any component or moving the compressor.
Care and storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always disconnect the air tools from the compressor after you've finished. • Store the air hoses rolled up neatly with the air compressor, away from sharp or hot objects. • Conduct a visual inspection of the air hoses – if damaged, replace them, don't try to repair them. • Conduct regular maintenance on the compressor as per the Manufacturer's Instructions – get an authorised dealer to do any repairs. <div data-bbox="493 1514 1310 2080" data-label="Image"> </div>

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Inspection and maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct maintenance as per the Manufacturer's Specifications. • Get an authorised dealer to do any repairs or checks/alterations to the motor settings. • Maintain inspection and test records in accordance with SMS-16-SR-0057 Inspection and Testing and SMS-05-SR-0027 Records Management.
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Additional controls