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TOOLBOX TALK

Nail Gun Safety

DEFINITION:

Recently, three injury reports described the details of accidents that occurred while employees were using pneumatic nail guns.

One injury resulted in an employee shooting himself through the thigh. The nail was a Ring Shank and it embedded itself in the employee's femur (large thigh bone) which was shattered by the impact. Surgery was required to remove the nail.

Another case involved an employee who shot himself in the groin area.

In the third case, an employee injected a nail into the fleshy part of his thigh.

All three investigations revealed that the nail gun safety spring, which holds the nose guard in the extended position, was not in place. This allowed the gun to discharge when the trigger was depressed because the nose guard was easily slid back when the gun was placed against the worker. The nose guard being depressed is like cocking a gun. Pulling the trigger with the gun "cocked" will fire it.

A nail gun is not designed for rapid fire. Trying to alter the rate of fire by removing the safety spring or keeping the trigger depressed will eventually end up in a jammed gun, or worse yet, accidents like those described above.

General Safety Rules for Nail Gun Use:

1. Never use a nail gun with the nose guard safety spring missing.
2. Be sure that when you carry a nail gun out of the work area, you do not carry it connected to the air power source.
3. When you are moving about the work area - keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to fire. Make sure you have only placed the nose guard against the material you are going to nail together.
4. Never rest the gun against any part of your body, or try to climb a ladder with the gun cradled against your body.
5. Remember that a nail gun is a labor and time saving tool -- but it cannot save the time lost to an accident. Use it safely!!!