

# TIP SHEET

A series of health and safety tips to prevent work-related injuries in the trucking industry



## Never Fool with an Air Tool



*Safe use of air tools starts with reading the manufacturer's instructions.*

Whether using grinders, cutters, drills, chipping hammers, ratchets, or impact wrenches, safe handling is essential to prevent injuries. While these powerful air tools help make for quick and easy repair work, most operate between 70 and 100 pounds per square inch (psi). Some even reach 2,000 foot-pounds of torque. A broken or loose attachment ejected at those ratings hits you, hard! Day-to-day, vibration, repetitive motion, and awkward positions can also hurt – even tripping over a hose. You can greatly reduce your risks before using a tool by reading the manufacturer's instructions. Here are a few other basic tips for air tool safety.



Washington State Department of  
Labor & Industries

### TIPS TO LIVE BY

#### Before you start

- Select the right tool and attachments for the job and inspect them for any damage.
- Set up screens or shields in areas where nearby workers may be exposed to flying fragments, chips, dust, and loud noise.
- Ensure that the compressed air supply is clean and dry, and that hoses and fittings are in good condition.
- Make sure tool is securely fastened to the hose.
- Install all required guards and clips.

#### While using your air tool

- Don't use the tool at a pressure above the manufacturer's rating.
- Wear safety glasses or a face shield, safety boots, hearing protection, and work gloves.
- Never blow compressed air toward yourself or other people for any reason.

#### After each job is done

- Disconnect tools when not in use: This includes before servicing, and when changing attachments and drill bits.
- Properly store away the tool and hoses after use.
- Clean up any debris, oil, or grease from the work area floor.
- Ensure tools are clean, lubricated, and properly maintained for the next job.

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[KeepTruckingSafe.org](http://KeepTruckingSafe.org)

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