

Jobsite: _____
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SMOHIT Safety Sense
 Toolbox Talks for the Sheet Metal Industry

Powder-Actuated Tools

- Powder-actuated tools are commonly used tools in the sheet metal industry. They use explosive power to fasten fixtures, such as hanger straps and nails, with enough force to penetrate concrete, steel and masonry.
- Powder-actuated tools act like loaded guns. Handle powder-actuated tools with the same respect and safety precautions as you would a firearm. Only those who are trained and certified are authorized to operate these tools. You need a license to operate these tools.
- A powder-actuated tool should never be loaded until it is ready for use, and should be unloaded immediately after use. Never leave loaded tools unattended.
- Never point a loaded or unloaded powder-actuated tool at anyone, and always keep hands clear of the open muzzle end of the tool.
- Test powder-actuated tools before each use to assure that the tools and their safety devices are all working properly. Remove any tool if you find defects or if a tool is not working properly.
- Do not use or store powder-actuated tools around the vicinity of flammable, explosive or combustible materials.
- Eye, face and hearing protection should be worn when using powder-actuated tools.
- Do not use powder-actuated tools on very hard or brittle materials such as cast iron, surface-hardened steel, face brick or hollow tile. If you are uncertain about the surface on which you are using the tool, ask your supervisor.
- Power-actuated tools should held firmly. Press the tool against the surface at a 90° angle. Never drive a fastener into uneven or chipped surfaces where previous fastening attempts were unsatisfactory.
- Never shoot a surface unless you are certain the fastener will not pass completely through the surface, or unless the surface is "backed."

Instructor Tips

- **Remind workers that only those who are trained and certified are authorized to operate powder-actuated tools, and must carry certification cards at all times.**
- **Demonstrate the proper way to handle and use a powder-actuated tools.**
- **Explain that a "backed" surface is one in which a fastener will not pass completely through or cause a flying hazard.**

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