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## Compressed Air

Compressed air is not a plaything and must be used in a safe manner. So before grabbing an air hose and going into action, there are a number of safety guidelines which should be followed.

First of all, be sure you have the right air hose. Air hoses look alike. Sometimes hose lines are crossed, and you could be fooled.

Next, make sure the air hose is good condition. An air hose is designed to withstand pressure, but it becomes weakened at the places where it is bent, where it is attached to a shut off valve and to the nozzle, and wherever it has been kinked. Such weak points may swell like a balloon and burst, throwing pieces of hose in every direction. This may also cause the hose to thrash about dangerously. These precautions should be followed:

Keep air hoses out of areas where they are a trip hazard and subject to damage by trucks. Prevent sharp objects-even hose fittings that have been burred-from rubbing against the hose. Always coil the hose-without kinks-and hang it over a broad support, not over a hook, nail, or angle iron, when not in use. Keep the connections pinned at all times. You can use tie wire to secure the connection.

Where you have a choice of pressure, use the lowest pressure that will do the job. There are many good reasons for this, and here are a few:

Air pressure of 40 lbs. can drive chips, as well as scale, from inside the piping into your face and eyes with the force of shrapnel. Such air driven missiles still do damage when they bounce off a surface, spinning much like a high-speed cutting head. Air pressure against the skin may penetrate deeply to cause internal hemorrhage and intense pain. Air that enters body openings can burst internal organs and cause slow, agonizing death. Air, even at 40 lbs., can blow an eye from its socket or rupture an eardrum.

The nozzle of an air hose is a deadly weapon. Do not point the nozzle of an air hose at anyone, not even yourself.

By now the message should be clear-compressed air must be treated with respect. It is a valuable tool, but it must be used intelligently and in a safe manner.