



TAILGATE SAFETY

POWDER ACTUATED TOOLS

Hilti, Ramset, and Red Head are just a few of the manufacturers of powder-actuated tools. These tools are designed to fire a special nail or fastening device into concrete, steel and masonry using a small caliber charge as a firing device.

Cal/OSHA requires that anyone who operates powder-actuated tools **MUST** be properly trained and qualified. They must carry a valid operator's card which proves qualification. Operator's cards are issued by "qualified instructors" who are authorized by the tool manufacturer or by the Powder Actuated Tool Manufacturers Institute (PATMI).

The following are some of the rules established by Cal/OSHA (CSO Article 27 Powder-Actuated Tools) for operation of powder-actuated tools. These regulations are in place for a reason – powder-actuated tools are powerful tools and dangerous when used improperly or carelessly:

- Tools shall be serviced and inspected for worn or damaged parts at regular intervals and before each use. Prior to the tool being put back into use, all worn or damaged parts shall be replaced by a qualified person. A record of this inspection and service shall be noted and dated on the tool inspection record.
- Instruction manuals, maintenance tools and accessories supplied with the tool shall be stored in the tool container when not in use.
- Powder-actuated tools and power loads shall be locked in a container and stored in a safe place when not in use and shall be accessible only to authorized personnel.
- The tool shall not be used in an explosive or flammable atmosphere.
- A loaded tool shall never be left unattended.
- Fasteners shall not be driven into very hard or brittle materials including, but not limited to, cast iron, glazed tile, hardened steel, glass block, natural rock, hollow tile or most brick.
- Fasteners shall not be driven into any spalled area.
- Fasteners shall not be driven through existing holes unless a specific guide means, as recommended and supplied by the tool manufacturer, is used to assure positive alignment.

The employer shall require that:

- Tools be operated in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Eye or face protection be worn by operators and assistants when the tool is in use.
- Any tool found not to be in working condition be immediately removed from service, tagged "DEFECTIVE" and not used until it has been repaired in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Tools not be loaded until just prior to the intended firing time. If the work is interrupted after loading, then the tool shall be unloaded immediately.
- Neither loaded nor empty tools shall ever be pointed at any person.
- The tool always be held perpendicular to the work surface when fastening into any material, except for specific applications recommended by the tool manufacturer.
- In the event of a misfire, the operator hold the tool firmly against the work surface for a period of 30 seconds and then follow the instructions set forth in the manufacturer's instructions.
- Power loads of different power levels and types be kept in separate compartments or containers.
- A sign at least 8 x 10 inches (20 x 25 cm), using boldface type no less than 1-inch (2.5 cm) in height, be conspicuously posted within 50 feet (15 m) of the area where the tools are being used. The sign shall bear wording similar to the sign shown above.

Training Tips: a) Discuss the dangers of powder-actuated tools. b) Make it clear that horseplay near or with powder-actuated tools may cause termination of employment. c) Have face protection, eye protection, hearing protection, etc. that employees will be wearing available to distribute.



North Coast Builders Exchange ~Tailgate Topics
Ph (707) 542-9502 **Fax (707) 542-2027**