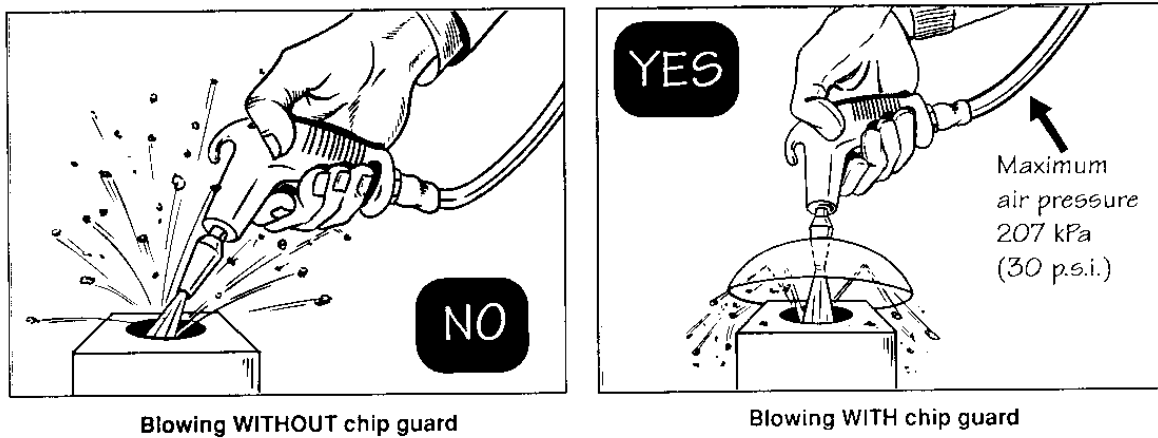


Work **Safe!** Bulletin

USING COMPRESSED AIR FOR CLEANING

Bulletin No.: 150
May 1993

Cleaning materials and equipment with compressed air is dangerous. It should only be done where there is no alternate safe method and proper equipment and procedures are used. **COMPRESSED AIR MUST NEVER BE DIRECTED TOWARD THE BODY AT ANY PRESSURE.**



It may appear that using compressed air for cleaning is relatively harmless. However, injuries have often occurred to workers, especially to the eyes and ears. This results from materials and particles being blown into the eyes and ears at great velocity. Wood chips, dust, metal and plastic filings are some of the more common agents. Death can result when a compressed airstream is directed towards the skin and air enters the bloodstream through a break in the skin, or when air enters a body opening.

Compressed air is available in a great many industrial workplaces and is delivered at pressures up to 1050 kPa(150 psi). Portable compressors are used on construction sites and the risks are the same.

If compressed air is the **only alternative available for cleaning**, ensure that you do the following:

- Nozzle pressure **MUST** remain below 207kPa (30 psi). It will be necessary to use a pressure reducing device or internally regulated nozzle to provide for this. Always use the lowest possible pressure for the task.
- Use protective guards on the nozzle or other guarding means to direct particles from blowing back into the worker's face and body.
- Wear personal protective clothing, including full body coveralls, hand protection, face shields or safety eyewear and hearing protection.
- Ensure other workers in the vicinity are protected from being exposed to the airstream and any airborne particles. Physical barriers or screens may be required

**NEVER DIRECT COMPRESSED AIR TOWARDS YOURSELF OR OTHERS.
NEVER USED COMPRESSED AIR FOR CLEANING YOUR WORK CLOTHES.**