

SAFETY ALERT

OSHA Citation: **Compressed Air Nozzles**

Incorrect (nozzles without relief holes)



Correct (nozzles with relief holes, or star-tipped)



Incident

In May of 2015, the Minnesota Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) conducted an inspection on the St Paul Campus and found an air nozzle operating at a pressure greater than 30 psi when dead-ended. This was considered a serious violation and a regulatory citation was issued which included a \$1,200 fine.

The Rule

Compressed air used for cleaning purposes must be regulated to keep the pressure below 30 psi, or must use a nozzle with relief holes or other safety features (e.g., star tipped nozzle) that limit the air pressure to 30 psi or less when dead-ended (i.e., when the primary nozzle opening is held against a flat surface). The rule is intended to protect workers from injecting air through the skin or into the eyes.

What Is Being Done to Address This Risk?

Supervisors and users of air nozzles are being asked to include compressed air nozzles in their ongoing work area inspections. University Health and Safety representatives will also include air nozzles when conducting work area safety audits to remind employees of the rule. This safety alert is being distributed to areas known or likely to be using compressed air.

Actions for Supervisors and Employees

Inspect your work areas frequently to ensure all air nozzles have air relief holes, or other means to ensure the air pressure remains below 30 psi when the air nozzle is dead-ended.

If you have questions regarding this alert, contact University Health and Safety at (612) 626-6002.