



WisCon Words of Wisdom

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October is National Protect Your Hearing Month

Occupational hearing loss is one of the most common work-related illnesses in the United States. Each year, about 22 million U.S. workers are exposed to hazardous noise levels at work. Over 30 million U.S. workers are exposed to chemicals, some of which are harmful to the ear and hazardous to hearing. In addition to damaging workers' quality of life, occupational hearing loss carries a high economic price to society. Visit the CDC.gov website for their DOL/ OSHA and CDC hearing conservation resources - [Protect Your Hearing CDC.gov](#).

Upcoming Webinar Topics

Fire Prevention	10/3
Ear Buds	10/10
Standard and Universal Precautions	10/17
Compressed Air	10/24
Hexavalent Chromium	10/31

Sign up [here](#) for weekly webinar reminders! Click [here](#) to view previous webinars!

OSHA's Top 10 Cited Standards for Fiscal Year 2022

During the National Safety Council's Safety Congress & Expo, OSHA released its preliminary top most frequently cited standards, covering the period from October 1, 2021 to September 6, 2022.

The top 10 cited standards include:

1. Fall Protection – General Requirements: 5,260 violations
2. Hazard Communication: 2,424
3. Respiratory Protection: 2,185
4. Ladders: 2,143
5. Scaffolding: 2,058
6. Lockout/Tagout: 1,977
7. Powered Industrial Trucks: 1,749
8. Fall Protection – Training Requirements: 1,556
9. Personal Protective and Lifesaving Equipment – Eye and Face Protection: 1,401
10. Machine Guarding: 1,370.

Severe Violator Enforcement Program Updates

The Severe Violator Enforcement Program (SVEP) is a program that concentrates resources on inspecting employers that have demonstrated indifference to their OSH Act obligations by committing willful, repeated, or failure-to-abate violations. OSHA released a number of significant changes to the SVEP. These changes are effective as of September 15, 2022 and include the following:

- There are no longer high-emphasis hazards, all OSHA standards are now applicable,
- The SVEP period begins once an employer's abatement certification is complete and received by OSHA and lasts for 3 years,
- A reduced 2-year SVEP period may be permitted if the employer initiates a Safety and Health Management System,
- SVEP removal criteria is now codified into the directive, and
- Requirements for follow-up inspections are established.

Cleaning with Compressed Air – What to do?

What does OSHA say about cleaning with compressed air?

OSHA Standard [1910.242\(b\)](#) states, “compressed air shall not be used for cleaning purposes except where reduced to less than 30 p.s.i. and then only with effective chip guarding and personal protective equipment”. This breaks down to two parts, reducing dead-end pressure and using effective guarding and personal protective equipment (PPE).

The first thing to note is that OSHA does not restrict the maximum pressure of a gun, cleaning lance, etc. In all circumstances, only the maximum pressure when **dead-ended** (i.e. tip of the air nozzle is blocked) is restricted. The air compressor at your facility may run at a much higher pressure (between 80-120 p.s.i. is common) than the cleaning limit set by OSHA. This means that you have several options for how to achieve the maximum pressure and still effectively clean. The first option may be to reduce the pressure at your air compressor to less than 30 p.s.i., this may not be an ideal method in every circumstance. In that case, another option may be to look into purchasing air guns, cleaning lances, nozzles, etc. from your

supplier that limit the dead-end pressure to less than 30 p.s.i.

Once you have a plan in place for how to limit the dead-end pressure to less than 30 p.s.i., you can look into effective chip guarding and PPE. Chip guarding can be put in place on the gun, at the point of work, or in front of the worker. Where you place and what type of chip guarding you use will depend on the type of work you do.

Common PPE used for compressed air cleaning includes safety glasses/goggles, protective clothing including clothes that cover the arms and hands, and hearing protection. Your work situation may not require all of these items of PPE or you may need additional protective equipment, which is why it is so important to conduct a workplace hazard assessment. More information about OSHA’s enforcement of cleaning with compressed air as they apply to particular circumstances can be found in their [Letters of Interpretation](#).

If you are looking for assistance on conducting a workplace hazard assessment or complying with OSHA standards related to compressed air, you can reach out to [WisCon](#) for assistance.

COVID-19 Bivalent Boosters

The virus that causes COVID-19 has changed over time due to mutations. One way to protect yourself from the mutations is to consider getting the new bivalent COVID-19 booster dose.

These are called bivalent COVID-19 vaccines because they contain the original strain of COVID-19 and the Omicron strain to provide better protection. A bivalent COVID-19 vaccine may also be referred to as an updated booster.

There are two bivalent COVID-19 vaccine boosters to choose from Moderna and Pfizer. The Moderna COVID-19 bivalent booster is a single dose available to those 18 and older. The Pfizer COVID-19 bivalent booster is a single dose available to those 12 years and older.

Eligibility for the bivalent COVID-19 booster depends on:

- Your age
- When you completed your primary vaccine series or,
- When you received your most recent booster dose of the monovalent covid-19 booster

Those who have received the primary vaccine series or a monovalent booster must wait at least 2 months after 2nd dose or last booster before receiving a dose of the updated bivalent booster.

If you are eligible for the updated bivalent COVID-19 booster, the updated dose you receive does not need to be from the same manufacturer of your primary vaccine series. For example if you received the 2 dose series of Moderna for your primary vaccine series you can get the Pfizer bivalent booster and vice versa.

For more information on the new bivalent booster doses visit the FDA’s Webpages:

Moderna: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/moderna-covid-19-vaccines>

Pfizer: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccines>

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