



ABRASIVE BLASTING



Purpose

The purpose of this program is to provide safe guidelines for the operation and maintenance of abrasive blasting equipment and their related components for Veracity Field Services.

Scope

This program covers all employees involved in abrasive blasting jobs. Whenever hazardous substances such as dusts, fumes, mists, vapors, or gases exist or are produced in the course of construction work, their concentrations shall not exceed the limits specified in the "Threshold Limit Values of Airborne Contaminants – 1970" of the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists. When ventilation is used as an engineering control method, the system shall be installed and operated according to the requirements of 1926.57 (Ventilation).

Key Responsibilities

Supervisors

- Be aware of potentially hazardous conditions that may arise during the blasting process prior to starting any blasting job and must take measures to protect employees.
- Ensure that all employees are trained on related safety topics.
- Understand the importance of regularly scheduled maintenance for continued safe operation of blast equipment. Ensure that all employees comply with this policy and all other related policies.

Blast Employees

- Be familiar with the safe operating functions of blasting equipment to be used on a job.
- Comply with all company policies.
- Have knowledge of hazards associated with respirable silica.
- Understand they are prohibited from using compressed air for cleaning unless the pressure is reduced to less than 30 pounds per square inch and be equipped with effective chip guarding and proper PPE.

Procedure

General

Abrasives and the surface coatings on the materials blasted are shattered and pulverized during blasting operations and the dust formed will contain particles of respirable size. The composition and toxicity of the dust from these sources shall be considered in making an evaluation of the potential hazards.

Dust shall not be permitted to accumulate on the floor or on ledges outside of an abrasive blasting enclosure. Dust spills shall be cleaned up promptly. Aisles and walkways shall be kept clear of steel shot or similar abrasives which may create a slipping hazard.

Equipment Handling

Follow these guidelines when moving blasting equipment to prevent back strains and crushing injuries:



- Use a forklift, crane or other type of lifting device for transporting a blast machine; always use a lifting device when the machine contains abrasive.
- Never manually move a blast machine where abrasive has been spilled on hard surfaces or on a wet or slippery surface.
- Never attempt to manually move a blast machine containing abrasive.
- Always disconnect hoses from machines to avoid interference during moving.

Air Compressors

- Air compressors must be located in a well-ventilated area. It must be able to contain large volumes of clean, toxicant-free air. This means the compressor must be placed up wind from the blasting operation and out of the range of dust and flying abrasives.
- Due to the high pressure that air compressors create, precautions must be taken to prevent unleashing of strong forces that can cause serious bodily injury.
- Air for abrasive blasting respirators must be free of harmful quantities of dust, mists, or noxious gases and must be inspected daily, prior to use and comply with CFR 1910.134(I) (Respiratory Protection).
- Never adjust the pressure setting on a compressor above the blast equipment maximum working pressure rating. The maximum working pressure rating is indicated on the manufacturer's metal identification plate.

Blast Pot

- Position blast pots and/or compressors on level ground. Machines operate best when they sit on level surfaces.
- For communication purposes place blast pot between the compressor and the surface to be blasted. This will enable the pot tender and operator to make visual contact.
- All couplings and pipefitting on the blast pot, compressor and hoses must be airtight.
- Blast pots must be inspected daily prior to use.

Hoses and Connectors

- Couplings must have safety wires in place and be secure as required by federal safety regulations. The operator shall be responsible to ensure that each coupling has safety wires in place.
- Whip checks must be installed at bull hose connections.
- Operator should hold onto the blast hose until the air pressure from the nozzle drops off to zero.
- Do not use hoses with soft spots.
- Never use tape to repair a blown-out hose.
- Immediately replace a hose if a blowout or leak occurs.
- Hose ends must come into contact with coupling gaskets to prevent leaks and to maintain static electricity conductivity.

Nozzles and Remote Controls

- Blast nozzles shall be bonded and grounded to prevent the buildup of static charges. Where flammable or explosive dust mixtures may be present, the abrasive blasting enclosure, the ducts, and the dust collector shall be constructed with loose panels or explosion venting areas, located on sides away from any



occupied area, to provide pressure relief in case of explosion following the principles set forth in the National Fire Protection Association Explosion Venting Guide. NFPA 68-1954.

- Organic abrasives which are combustible shall be used only in automatic systems.
- Blast cleaning nozzles shall be equipped with an operating valve which must be held open manually. A support shall be provided on which the nozzle may be mounted when it is not in use.
- All blast machines must be equipped with remote control systems to start and stop the blasting process.
- Never tape, strap, or tie down an air actuated remote control lever or choke electric remote control switch.
- If there is the slightest delay in reaction time of the handle lever or lever lock to open, check for dust and dirt build-up around pivot pins before resuming blasting. Also, test the tension on the lever springs, and replace them immediately if they do not respond rapidly.
- Substituting component pieces with other manufacturer's parts is not allowed.
- Inspect blast nozzles for wear and cracks on the inner liner. When a nozzle orifice is worn 1/16" larger than its original size, it should be replaced.
- Check nozzles and nozzle holders for deterioration of thread form. Threads on nozzles and their companion holders must not be cross-threaded, worn or distorted.
- Hoses that are being tied and lifted to blasting operations being conducted above grade, i.e., scaffolds, shall be depressurized to prevent accidental start-up.

Operator Signals

- On the job site, voice communication is often impossible. Even shouts cannot be heard over the noise of compressors and blasting. In addition, the operator's head will be enclosed in the helmet, which blocks out sound and limits vision. For these reasons, an industry wide standard set of hand and sound signals has been developed.
- Signals may be visual hand movements, flashing light, pulls on a rope or sounds made by banging a hammer or using a horn or electric buzzer.
- Every operator must become familiar with the signals to be used on the jobsite.

Respirator Use

- A specific work-site procedure shall be developed where respirators or CE blasting hoods/helmets are required to protect the health of the operator. A respiratory protection program shall be established wherever it is necessary to use respiratory protective equipment including worksite specific procedures and elements for required respirator use. Abrasive blasting respirators shall be worn by all abrasive blasting operators under certain conditions.
- Equipment for the protection of eyes, face and body shall be supplied to the operator when the respirator design does not provide such protection and to any other personnel working in the vicinity of abrasive blasting operations. This equipment shall conform to the requirements of 1926.102 (Eye and Face Protection).
- Equipment for protection of the eyes and face shall be supplied to any other personnel working in the vicinity of abrasive blasting operations.

Environmental Controls

- Organic abrasives which are combustible shall be used only in automatic systems. Where flammable or



explosive dust mixtures may be present, the construction of the equipment, including the exhaust system and all electrical wiring, shall conform to the requirements of American National Standard Installation of Blower and Exhaust Systems for Dust, Stock, and Vapor Removal or Conveying, Z33.1-1961 (NFPA 91-1961), and Subpart S of 1926.57 (Ventilation).

- The work area must be inspected for exterior electrical power lines that may endanger operators.
- Operators should use care to avoid directly blasting power lines and insulators.
- Do not blast in atmospheres that contain flammable fumes.
- Take precautions at the work site to eliminate hazardous surface obstacles that may cause tripping hazards or interfere with worker mobility.
- Adequate ventilation must be provided for employees working within enclosures.
- Never operate compressor if hoses are frozen. When winter temperatures drop below freezing, check for ice prior to pressurizing hoses.
- Provide adequate drinking water for operators, especially during summer.

Personal Protective Equipment

- Secure hoses by tying them to scaffolding or personnel platforms, when working from elevations, to prevent injury from hoses falling on other personnel working below or near blasting area.
- Before using any blasting abrasive, check the MSDS to find out the chemical composition of the abrasive material.
- Equipment for the protection of eyes, face and body shall be supplied to the operator when the respirator design does not provide such protection and to any other personnel working in the vicinity of abrasive blasting operations. This equipment shall conform to the requirements of 1926.102 (Eye and Face Protection).
- Ventilation systems and dust collectors may be necessary in enclosed conditions.
- Noise from abrasive blast nozzles can be loud enough to damage the hearing of blasters and others on the work site. Workers must not be exposed to noise levels exceeding 80 decibels as an eight-hour time weighted average (80 dBA TWA), therefore all blasters shall wear earplugs.
- Blaster must wear heavy-duty gloves and steel toe boots.
- Helmet lenses should be changed as soon as pitting or frosting takes place.

Checklist

Abrasive Blasting Checklist

An abrasive blasting checklist must be completed prior to commencement of any abrasive blasting work. The checklist can be found at: <https://veracityfieldservices.com/forms>