



# West Bay Sanitary District Code of Safe Practice

---

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Initial: June 01, 2012

Questions or comments regarding this  
Code of Safe Practice should be directed  
to the Regulatory Compliance Coordinator.

---

## Heat Gun

---

A heat gun is an electric-powered, air-driven tool in the shape of a hand-held gun and produces up to 1200°F of flameless heat (heated air). The gun is used for molding and welding plastics, softening and forming plastic laminates, paint and wallpaper stripping, curing epoxies, heat shrinking cables, softening floor tiles, putty and other related uses.

---

### GENERAL SAFETY

Before operating a heat gun, the operator must:

- Be designated or directed by supervisory personnel to operate the machine.
- Read and understand the manufacturer's operational instructions and these safe work practices.
- Receive instructions from experienced shop personnel in the operation of the machine.
- Read and understand the Safe Work Practices for electrical machinery.

### CAUTIONS

- Keep work area well lit, clean and uncluttered and keep non-workers away from the work area.
- Disconnect the heat gun when not in use.
- While using the gun, do not allow your body to come into contact with grounded surfaces such as water pipes, appliance chassis etc.
- Treat the gun as you would a lit propane torch, remembering that even limited contact with a combustible material can produce a flame. Never point the gun in the direction of combustible materials such as trash, paint, paper, cloth, wood shaving, etc.
- Make sure the tool is in a stable position with nozzle pointed away from operator when heat gun is being used as a bench tool.

- Wear proper clothing; avoid jewelry or any other loose fitting items. Use caution to keep long hair clear of the nozzle. Wear safety glasses while operating the heat gun.
- Never operate power tools when extremely tired or when taking prescription or non-prescription, sleep inducing drugs.
- Never touch the nozzle of the heat gun during operation or for a three-minute cool-down period after the heat gun has been turned off.
- Never operate the heat gun lying on its side on a bench.
- Keep nozzle at least ¼-inch from work surfaces to ensure unrestricted air flow.
- Never restrict the intake or outlet openings of the heat gun.
- Never allow the tool to strike a hard surface or to be hit with a hard blow, as it may result in the nozzle being loosened from the housing of the heat gun.
- Many materials can be damaged or may ignite when exposed to high heat for a long enough period of time. When using on a material for the first time, begin with the low heat setting, moving up to the high heat setting only if the low setting is insufficient to accomplish the task.
- Keep the heat flow away from heat sensitive (e.g., glass), combustible (e.g., paper, rubber), or easily melted (e.g., vinyl) materials. When working in proximity of these materials, use shielding to protect them.
- Hidden areas such as behind walls, ceilings, floors, soffit boards and other panels may contain flammable materials that could be ignited by the heat gun. The ignition of these materials may not be readily apparent and could result in property damage and injury to persons. When working in these locations, keep the heat gun moving in a back-and-forth motion. Lingering in one spot could ignite the material behind it.
- Lead-based paint should only be removed by a professional and should not be removed using a heat gun. Never remove paint that is suspected of having a lead base.

## **PAINT REMOVAL**

If removing paint with the heat gun:

- Move the work piece outdoors. If this is not possible, keep the work area well ventilated. To ventilate an area, open windows and doors and use fans to move air.
- Remove or cover any carpets, rugs, furniture, clothing, cooking utensils and air ducts.
- Place drop cloths in the work area to catch any paint chips or peelings. Wear protective clothing such as extra work shirts, overalls and hats.

- Work in one room at a time. Furnishings should be removed or placed in the center of the room and covered. Sealing doorways with drop cloths should seal off work areas from the rest of the dwelling.
- Children, pregnant or potentially pregnant women and nursing mothers should not be present in the work area until the work is done and all clean up is complete.
- Wear a dust respirator mask or a dual filter (dust and fume) respirator mask that has been approved by OSHA, NIOSH, or the Bureau of Mines. Be sure the mask fits. Note: beards and facial hair may keep masks from sealing properly. Change filters often.
- Keep the heat gun moving while in use. Excessively heating one area will generate fumes that might be inhaled by the operator.
- Keep food and drink out of the work area. Wash hands, arms and face and rinse mouth before eating or drinking. Do not smoke or chew gum or tobacco in the work area.
- Clean up all removed paint and dust by wet-mopping the floors. Use a wet cloth to clean all walls, sills and any other surface where paint or dust is clinging. Do not sweep, dry-dust or vacuum. Use a high phosphate detergent or trisodium phosphate (TSP) to wash and mop areas.
- At the end of each work session put the paint chips and debris in a double plastic bag, close it with tape or twist ties, and dispose of properly.
- Remove protective clothing and work shoes in the work area to avoid carrying dust into the rest of the shop or building. Wash work clothes separately. Wipe shoes off with a wet rag that is then washed with the work clothes. Wash hair and body thoroughly with soap and water.

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Protection Area	PPE Required
Eye	Safety glasses or goggles meeting the ANSI Z87.1 Standard.
Face	
Hand	Work gloves when appropriate.
Head	
Foot	Leather safety shoes or boots.
Body	
Respiratory	Dust mask or respirator with HEPA filter if removing paint.
Hearing	Wear earplugs or earmuffs as necessary.