# A screen shot of a computer Description automatically generatednail gun safety

Nail guns are increasingly replacing hammers in roofing construction. They are easy to use and offer increased efficiency for nailing tasks. However, nail guns are responsible for a multitude of emergency room visits annually.

Puncture wounds to the hands and fingers are the most common types of injuries, but more serious injuries and even fatalities can occur.

*Nail gun injuries often occur when:*

* Working too fast
* Habitually squeezing the trigger while the gun is not in use
* Unintentionally discharging a nail from double firing
* Nail penetration through lumber
* Nail ricochet after striking a hard surface
* Miss the intended target
* Awkward-position nailing
* Bypassing or disabling safety mechanisms

*Implement the following controls to prevent nail gun injuries:*

* **Engineering Controls:** Use full sequential trigger nail guns, this type only fires a nail when the safety contact tip is engaged, followed by squeezing the trigger
* **Administrative Controls:** always follow manufacturers’ guidelines for the tool’s intended purpose. Report and discuss injuries and near misses

*Establish nail gun work procedures, examples include:*

* Setting up the job site layout so that workers are spread out and not in their coworkers’ line of fire
* Before performing work, inspect the nail gun it is in good working condition. Remove broken or malfunctioning nail guns and tag them as “out of service”
* Do not bypass or disable safety mechanisms such as removing the spring from the safety contact tip, which  
  makes an unintended discharge more likely
* Inspect lumber surfaces before nailing. Look for knots, nails, straps, hangers, etc. that could  
  cause recoil or ricochet.