

Are Your Gladhands Polarized?

Many may not pay much attention to their gladhands. In fact, at first glance, there may not seem to be much of a visible difference between a service and emergency gladhand other than color-coded red and blue connector plates. However, upon closer inspection, there are additional characteristics that differ between the two. These features avoid the risk of cross-connecting the service and emergency air lines.

Service and Emergency Air Lines

When coupled correctly, the service air line carries air from the brake pedal to the trailer brakes. The emergency air line is responsible for supplying air to the trailer air tanks and controlling the emergency brakes. If coupled improperly, the brakes won't release. For the novice driver, this can be an embarrassing roadside call.

Polarized Gladhands

Precautionary measures incorporated into the design of service and emergency gladhands avoids accidental cross-connection. Service and emergency gladhands are polarized, which means they are keyed with stoppers or arms, only allowing a connection with the correct corresponding gladhand, avoiding cross-connections. Additionally, polarized gladhands also feature color-coded connector plates. Gladhand seals and air lines can also be color-coded to offer further visual references ensuring red connects to red and blue to blue.

Universal Gladhands



Non color-coded connector plate and no stoppers or arms

Universal gladhands do not have the same polarized fit and function as a service or emergency gladhand. They are generic and devoid of keyed stoppers and arms, and color-coding. With universal gladhands, there is a significantly higher risk of cross-connection. For those that do choose to use universal gladhands, pay extra attention when coupling to the service and emergency lines on the trailer. When using universal products, adding colored gladhand seals or colored grips to the cables can aid in making an air line's function more visible.

Polarized Straight Gladhands



Polarized Angled/Trailer Gladhands



Straight To Straight

Straight To Angled



The service arm can not rotate past the emergency stopper



The stopper on the straight emergency gladhand will not rotate past the stopper on the angled service gladhand

TIPS

Have technical questions? Get the latest tips from a skilled Phillips engineer!
Call: 888-959-0995 OR e-mail: techtips@phillipsind.com

PRODUCT INFORMATION related to this article is available [here](#).

VISIT US ONLINE at www.phillipsqwiktechtips.com
To be added to our mailing list and for all past issues.