

Hearing conservation

Introduction:

Noise-induced hearing loss is permanent and irreversible—but it is preventable.

Do what you can to protect your hearing.

Removing hazardous noise from our workplace is the most effective way to prevent noise-induced hearing loss. Things like installing a muffler or building an acoustic barrier.

Hazards to watch for:

- Short duration, high intensity noise.
- If it's necessary for you to speak in a very loud voice or shout right into the ear of a person, it's likely the noise is high enough to require hearing protection.
- Noise exposure off the job.

Indicators of noise exposure:

- If you have roaring or ringing in your ears at the end of the workday, you are probably being exposed to too much noise.
- If speech or music sounds muffled to you after you leave work, but sounds more clear the next morning, you might have been exposed to noise that's causing temporary hearing loss. Temporary hearing loss can become permanent.

How loud is loud?

The critical sound level when hearing protection should be worn is 85 decibels, based on an 8-

hour time-weighted average. Or anytime you think the noise level is uncomfortable.

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|-------------------------|------------|
| ■ Bird chirping | 30-40 db |
| ■ Normal conversation | 50-60 db |
| ■ Heavy machinery | 70-90 db |
| ■ Jack hammer/chain saw | 100-120 db |
| ■ Gun shot | 140+ db |

Safe procedures:

- Notify management if you feel noise exposure is an issue.
- Don't resist wearing hearing protection when required.
- Wearing hearing protection shouldn't hurt you. Speak up if it does.
- Be sure you insert or wear hearing protection correctly. Ask if you aren't sure!
- Keep hearing protectors clean so you don't introduce dirt into your ears.
- Make suggestions to help reduce noise levels.

In conclusion:

Noise can cause irreversible damage to your hearing and can cause you psychological stress. Don't take chances with your ability to hear simply because you don't want to wear hearing protection. Be safe!