

HOW TO MANAGE NOISE HAZARDS

Understanding exposure, sources, decibel levels, and implementing effective prevention strategies.

THE IMPACT OF WORKPLACE NOISE



1 OCCUPATIONAL ILLNESS

Hearing loss is the most common work-related injury in the U.S. About **22 million U.S. workers** are exposed to hazardous noise levels at work.

SOURCE: CDC



2 ACCIDENT RISKS INCREASE

Noise disrupts communication and focus, leading to more errors, fatigue, and miscommunication—raising the risk of accidents and reducing efficiency.

SOURCE: OSHA



3 INSURANCE CLAIMS

Noise injuries account for millions in compensation costs. Workers' compensation claims due to occupational hearing loss disability are over **\$241 million** annually.

SOURCE: NIOSH

WHERE DOES NOISE COME FROM AND HOW LOUD IS TOO LOUD?

Common sources of noise and their associated levels are shown below.

Any exposure at or **above 85 dBA** requires immediate action. Prolonged exposure of more than 8 hours to noise at or above this level can lead to gradual, permanent hearing loss.

Faint			Moderate			Loud		Extremely Loud				Painful				
10 dBA	20 dBA	30 dBA	40 dBA	50 dBA	60 dBA	75 dBA	85 dBA	90 dBA	100 dBA	110 dBA	120 dBA	130 dBA	140 dBA	150 dBA	160 dBA	170 dBA
Normal Breathing			Quiet Office	Paper Rustling	Normal Conversation	Vacuum Cleaner	Hand Saw	Lawn Mower	Power Tools	Crying Baby	Sand-blasting	Jet Engine		Rocket Launch		

WAYS TO MEASURE NOISE



There are several types of instruments available to measure the noise levels:

- Sound level meters
- Noise dosimeters
- Octave band analyzers
- Certified mobile apps for phones

SOURCE: CDC, NIOSH

HOW TO PREVENT COMMON NOISE HAZARDS



Inform & Enforce PPE

Train teams and mandate the correct use of personal protective equipment.



Low-Noise Alternatives

Modify or replace noisy equipment, or encase machinery in enclosures.



Acoustic Barriers

Install acoustic barriers, panels, or increase physical distance.



Routine Measurements

Schedule regular decibel monitoring and periodic hearing tests.



Hearing Protection

Provide approved ear plugs and ear muffs rated for site noise levels.



Safety Procedures

Follow and enforce all OSHA and site-specific procedures strictly.



DON'T IGNORE THE WARNING SIGNS

RECOGNIZE THE SYMPTOMS OF HEARING LOSS



Ringling in the Ears After Work

Tinnitus — a persistent ringing, buzzing or hissing sound even in quiet environments.



Difficulty Understanding Speech

Struggling to follow conversations, especially in noisy environments or on phone calls.



Need Higher Volume on Devices

Consistently increasing TV, phone, or radio volume beyond what others find comfortable.



Feeling Fatigued or Disoriented

Unusual mental fatigue, headaches or disorientation following high-noise shifts.



Protect Hearing Before Damage is Done

If you notice any of the above symptoms, contact your healthcare provider. Hearing loss from noise exposure can be permanent. Make prevention priority today.

LOOKING FOR SAFETY SOLUTIONS?

Protect your team with hearing protection, PPE, signage, and other workplace safety essentials, shipped fast.

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