



Safety Tip of the Week

Your Safety Is Our Business®

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Proper Fit Of Hearing Protection

Hearing loss is the No. 1 sensory disability in the world. The World Health Organization estimates that 16 percent of hearing loss worldwide is attributable to occupational noise exposure.

Disposable or reusable plugs

Many disposable or reusable plugs are available and reduce noise by about 30-33 decibels. This is the Noise Reduction Rating (NRR) you see on the box. However, since the NRR is established in a laboratory with perfectly fitted plugs, experts recommend that the true rating is generally about 7 decibels less than indicated.

The formable foam earplug must be narrowed and compressed by rolling before it is inserted into the ear canal. Once inserted, the earplug expands to fill the ear canal and to reduce noise transmission further into the ear. If it is inserted incorrectly, the foam earplug will provide much less protection against noise.



To properly fit a formable foam earplug:

1. With clean hands, slowly roll and compress a foam earplug into a very thin cylinder.
2. Reach around the head with one hand to pull the top of the ear slightly outward and upward while inserting an earplug into the ear canal with the other hand.
3. After insertion, hold foam earplugs in place with a fingertip for a few moments to ensure that the plug expands in the ear canal without moving out of the ear. In a noisy environment, the reduction in perceived sound level as the plug expands should be noticeable.
4. Have a coworker visually check the earplug. If half or more of the earplug is sticking out of the ear canal, it is not fitted correctly and won't provide the designed protection.

Another important step to preventing hearing loss is to make a personal commitment to wear the appropriate hearing protection.

**Hearing damage is permanent...but it can be prevented.
Take hearing protection seriously!**