



# Weekly Safety Meeting

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## Proper Hearing Protection

Hearing loss is the No. 1 sensory disability in the world. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 22 million workers are exposed to potentially damaging noise at work each year. Whether you work at a sports venue, on a tarmac, or operating a jackhammer – hearing loss is preventable.

### Know Your Workplace Noise Levels!

If you need to raise your voice to speak to someone 3 feet away, noise level might be over 85 decibels. Several sound-measuring instruments are available to measure the noise levels in the workspace. These include sound level meters, noise dosimeters, and octave band analyzers.

Noise may be a problem in your workplace if you:

- Hear ringing or humming in your ears when you leave work;
- Must shout to be heard by a coworker an arm's length away; or
- Experience temporary hearing loss when leaving work.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Sound Level Meter App is one tool available to the public to download on mobile iOS devices.

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/noise/about/app.html>

This app measures sound levels in the workplace and provides noise exposure parameters to help reduce occupational noise-induced hearing loss.

### Standards

OSHA requires employers to implement a hearing conservation program when noise exposure is at or above 85 decibels averaged over 8 working hours, or an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA). Hearing conservation programs strive to prevent initial occupational hearing loss, preserve, and protect remaining hearing, and equip workers with the knowledge and hearing protection devices necessary to safeguard themselves.

### Health Effects

Exposure to loud noise kills the nerve endings in our inner ear. More exposure will result in dead nerve endings. The result is permanent hearing loss that cannot be corrected through surgery or with medicine. Noise-induced hearing loss limits your ability to hear high frequency sounds and

understand speech, which seriously impairs your ability to communicate. Hearing aids may help, but they do not restore your hearing to normal.

## Hearing Conservation Program

Under OSHA's Noise Standard, the employer must reduce noise exposure through engineering controls, administrative controls, or Hearing Protection Devices (HPDs) to attenuate the occupational noise received by the employee's ears to within levels specified in the OSHA Standards.

***HEARING DAMAGE IS PERMANENT...BUT IT CAN BE PREVENTED!***

