



Safety Tip of the Week

Protect Your Hearing in the Workplace

Protecting your hearing is one of the most critical, yet frequently overlooked, aspects of workplace safety. Unlike many physical injuries, noise-induced hearing loss occurs gradually over time. By the time you notice a change in your hearing, the damage is already permanent, because hearing loss is irreversible. Every year, thousands of workers suffer from preventable hearing loss due to hazardous occupational noise levels. Exposure to high noise levels can cause permanent hearing damage, increase stress, and contribute to workplace accidents by masking warning signals. If you have to raise your voice to speak to someone just an arm's length away, the noise level is likely hazardous and requires hearing protection.



Jobs that Can Cause Hearing Loss Include:

- Construction Sites: Operating heavy machinery;
- Manufacturing Facilities: Working near assembly lines or presses for long shifts;
- Grounds Maintenance: Using gas-powered lawnmowers, leaf blowers, and chainsaws;
- Warehouse Operations: Working close to constant forklift traffic, conveyors, and machinery;
- Maintenance Garages: Using wrenches, air compressors, and grinders; and
- Armed Forces: Working around intense, ongoing noise from aircraft, gunfire, and machinery.

Your Action Plan for Hearing Safety

Preventing hearing loss is a shared responsibility. Take these immediate steps to safeguard your ears:

- Wear Your PPE: use earplugs or earmuffs when entering designated high-noise zones;
- Keep Your Distance: Whenever possible, increase your distance from loud machinery;
- Maintain Equipment: Report poorly lubricated or malfunctioning machinery; and
- Rotate Tasks: Limit your continuous exposure to loud tasks by rotating duties with coworkers.

Hearing protection is part of your PPE. To be effective, these devices must create a proper acoustic seal, fit comfortably, and be compatible with other safety gear like hardhats or safety glasses.

USE HEARING PROTECTION...BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY!