

>> TOOLBOX TALK - Hearing Protection

Just the Facts:

Noise is one of the most common occupational health hazards. Construction workers may be exposed to hazardous levels of noise on a daily basis. This exposure puts them at high risk for losing their hearing and the high frequencies are the first to go.

The noise exposure that construction workers are exposed to daily requires the consistent and conscientious use of hearing protection. Sometimes workers forget or don't think their work environment is loud enough to warrant wearing hearing protection.

The Dangers:

Many workers are overexposed to noise. In time, overexposure can damage your hearing. Hearing loss prevents you from hearing other hazards on the job. It also causes problems in your personal life:

- It interferes with how you hear normal speech.
- It prevents you from socializing.
- It can cause high blood pressure.
- It is permanent.

Identify Controls:

Hearing loss on the worksite is preventable!

Noise is measured in decibels (dB). For example, a quick-cut saw produces 115 decibels; a jackhammer, 110 decibels; a drill, 100 decibels. Sound Energy doubles every time noise increases 3 decibels. Think about that. When the noise level is 80 decibels and it goes up to 83, the noise is twice

as loud. Equally, when sound energy is halved, there is a 3 decibel decrease.

Without hearing protection, your safe working limit for an 8-hour day with no other noise exposure is 85 decibels. This is comparable to the loudness of a room full of people.

Companies are required to identify tasks that exceed safe working limits through the use of noise surveys. Where possible, the noise hazard should be eliminated or at least lowered to safe levels through the use of engineering controls. When this is not practical, hearing protection is required.

Demonstrate:

Show two types of hearing protection:

- Ear plugs
- Ear muffs

Show how to insert ear plugs:

Reach one hand around back of your head, pull ear upwards to straighten S-shaped ear canal, then insert plug with other hand according to the manufacturer's instructions.



Complete and attach Toolbox Talk Meeting Form and process as per company policy.

Content adapted for NLCSA, with permission, from Manitoba Heavy Civil Association's Safety Talk.

TOOLBOX MEETING FORM

Date: _____ Project: _____

Supervisor: _____ No. in Crew: _____ No. Attending: _____

Review Last Meeting:

	Names of Attendees (Signature Required)
Topics Discussed (policies, practices, procedures, hazard assessment):	
Suggestions Offered:	
Action(s) to be Taken:	
Injuries/Accidents Reviewed:	

Supervisor's Remarks: _____

Signature: _____