

TAKE 5 – NOISE MANAGEMENT

This information paper is to provide minimum guidelines on working with noise to ensure your safety.

What is Noise?

- Noise refers to unwanted sound or vibration.
- Noise causes sound waves that make our ear drum vibrate.

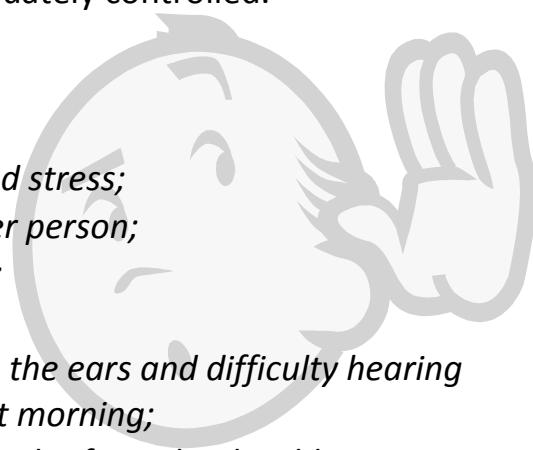


Why is Excessive Noise a Health Hazard?

Noise is one of the most wide-spread hazards facing workers and can cause noise-induced hearing loss or industrial deafness if not adequately controlled.

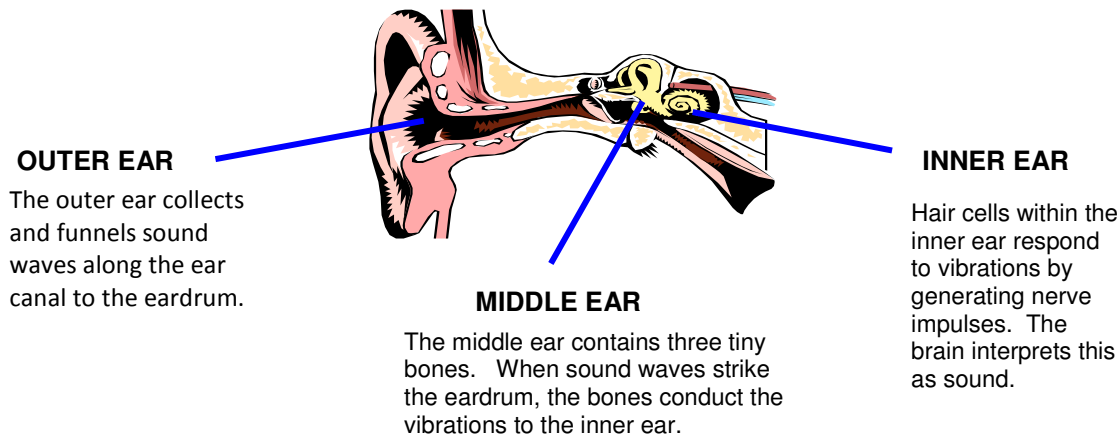
Exposure to excessive noise levels can result in:

- *Temporary or permanent damage to hearing;*
- *Adverse effects on blood pressure/heart rate and stress;*
- *Difficulty in understanding the speech of another person;*
- *Disturbance to the accuracy of work performed;*
- *Tinnitus (or ringing in the ears);*
- *Temporary reduction in hearing – e.g. ringing in the ears and difficulty hearing after a loud concert but no problems by the next morning;*
- *Damage to the ear drum and middle ear as a result of very loud sudden noises (e.g. an explosion);*



How do we Hear?

Healthy inner-ear hair cells are the key to good hearing. Although some die off naturally as you age, many more are killed early if your ears aren't protected from harmful noise.



When is Noise a Risk?

The Daily Noise Exposure Level allowable for a person in an 8 hour period is **85 dB(A)**. Noise can pose a risk when workplaces have excessive noise exposure and no control measures such as hearing protection are being used.



How can we Control Noise Exposure?

- By testing the noise levels of all plant, equipment and tools.
- By completing a risk assessment and compiling a workplace noise register for all equipment and tools.
- By instructing workers to wear personal protective equipment when appropriate.
- By providing information and training on noise.
- By considering noise levels when purchasing new equipment and tools.

What are my Responsibilities?

- Follow any instructions given for workplace health and safety in relation to noise.
- Wear any PPE issued by your Supervisor provided you have been properly trained in its use.
- Maintain PPE that has been provided in good condition.
- Obey any blue mandatory 'hearing protection must be worn' signs.
- Always be mindful of persons in close proximity when using noisy tools and equipment and make them aware of any hearing protection requirements.
- Inform your supervisor if you have any concerns/problems and immediately report hazards / risks in relations to noise

How to fit Ear Plugs

- Slowly roll and compress the plugs into a thin cone.
- Reach around the head and pull up and back on your outer ear (this is important as it straightens the ear canal and you will get a better fit of the ear plug).
- Insert plug well into the ear canal.
- Hold it until it expands.
- Keep plugs free from dirt.
- Discard after use - foam ear plugs are not reusable.
- Moulded earplugs – fit and maintain as per instruction provided on issue.

How to Use and Maintain Ear Muffs

1. Muffs must fully enclose the ear.
2. Adjust the head band to suit (note that excess hair and glasses may prevent the wearer from getting an effective seal).
3. Cushions can be cleaned in soapy water and rinsed but replace cushions twice a year or when they start to deteriorate.
4. Store away from dust and replace as necessary.

Equipment Noise Exposure Times

As a guide, the following table lists average noise exposure for certain equipment. The third column indicates the time period you could “safely” be exposed to that level of noise over the eight hour day. As you can see, when operating on or around most plant all day, some form of hearing protection will be required.

TOOL	Av.dB(A)	Exposure time without protection
Pavement Breaker	128	NIL
Chainsaw	113	NIL
Generator	107	3 Minutes
Hammer Drill	106	4 Minutes
Power Saw; Post hole digger	105	5 Minutes
Wacker Packer	104	6 Minutes
Planer – Compressor	103	7 Minutes
Drop Saw	102	9 Minutes
Jig Saw – Nailing Gun	101	12 Minutes
Orbital Sander - Bench Grinder	100	15 Minutes
Welding Machine	99	20 Minutes
7" Sander -Gernie (Water blaster)	98	25 Minutes
Concrete Mixer	97	30 Minutes
Electric Drill - 7" Grinder	96	35 Minutes
Band Saw; Isuki tractor	94	1 Hour
Brush cutter	92	1 Hour 36 Minutes
Nailing gun; compressor; lawn mower	90	2 Hours 30 Minutes
Multi-pac roller	89	3 Hours 12 Minutes
Office	30-40	24 Hours

If I get Hearing Damage, what do I do?

Once the sensitive nerve endings for hearing are damaged, there is no known method for restoring normal function, no matter what the cause.

Use preventive measures – as there is no cure.

Take 5 Quiz

Noise Management

CIRCLE THE ANSWER YOU BELIEVE IS CORRECT.

1. TRUE FALSE Exposure to excessive noise can affect health in a number of ways, e.g. temporary or permanent damage to hearing or ringing in the ears.
2. TRUE FALSE Wearing hearing protection, e.g. ear plugs or ear muffs, is one way in which noise exposure can be controlled.
3. TRUE FALSE Foam ear plugs can be reused over a week long period.
4. TRUE FALSE Once the nerve endings are damaged, there is no known method of restoring normal function.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT RECEIPT

I have read and understand the information provided to me in the *Take 5 for your Safety* brochure – Noise Management. I have retained this brochure for future reference.

I have completed the summary questions at the conclusion of this procedure and returned them to the Human Resources Section for retention on my personnel file.

Employee's Name (PRINT)

Employee's Signature

___/___/___
Date

ATTENDANCE SHEET

Training Event: Training Date:.....

Location: Session Time:.....

Name of Trainer:.....

I acknowledge that I have participated in and understand the content of the above training program.				
Name of Participant (print)	*E or C	Site / Business Unit	Trainee Signature	Competent Yes / Not Yet

Comments:

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Original: Forward to Human Resources Department record to be put on the Trainee’s personal file.

A copy maybe retained at the Trainee’s operating department.

*** E denotes Employee, C denotes Contractor.**

Take 5 Quiz - Answers

Noise Management

Answers

1. True
2. True
3. False
4. True