

Hearing Protection

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Just the Facts:

Noise is one of the most common occupational health hazards. Construction workers may be exposed to hazardous levels of noise daily. 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 can also cause 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.

Where possible, the noise hazard should be eliminated or at least lowered to safe levels using engineering controls. When this is not practical, hearing protection is required. All SCS employees have access to hearing protection devices – if you are in need of hearing protection, please let your manager know and we can provide them to you.

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