



SAFETY



CONVERSATION

WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN

In this safety conversation we will discuss the impact of workplace noise and what controls should be put in place to reduce the risk to yourself and others in the team.

HOW IT WILL HELP YOU IN YOUR JOB

Following this conversation, you will:

- Understand the types of risks associated noise levels in the workplace
- Know what the limits are and when action should be taken
- Understand what to do if you identify a issue and what controls are available

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What noise levels do you need to be aware of?

The level at which employers must assess the risk to someone's hearing and provide them with information and training is 80 decibels with an exposure limit value of 87 decibels, above which workers must not be exposed.

Noise can be found in most places inside and outside of work and is measured in decibels. The louder the noise the greater the decibels, however the measurement is done on a logarithmic scale which means that every 3dB increase represents a doubling of the noise level e.g. increasing from 83dB to 86dB means the noise level has actually doubled.

Why is this important?

- Noise induced hearing loss is irreversible and can lead to serious hearing problems resulting in a major social handicap during everyday life
- Loud noise can permanently damage your hearing over time but because it can take years to notice hearing loss many people working in noisy environments ignore the problem until it is too late. Signs of hearing loss may be when you need to turn up the volume on the TV or radio because you cannot make out the words or you must ask people to repeat things when holding a conversation
- Some hearing loss occurs naturally due to ageing but in other cases may be due to exposure to noise which affects hearing at different frequencies

What to do?

- ✓ Look out for noise warning signs. Wear suitable hearing protection before entering noisy areas or using noisy equipment and plant.
- ✓ Ensure the hearing protection you are using is providing suitable protection
- ✓ Make sure you position the ear cup or insert the ear plug properly, to make an effective seal
- ✓ Replace faulty or damaged hearing protection as soon as possible
- ✓ Store equipment properly when not in use to ensure it is kept clean and free from damage

What not to do?

- ✗ Ignore hearing protection warning signs
- ✗ Forget to wear hearing protection in noisy environments
- ✗ Remove acoustic covers or panels from noisy equipment, unless necessary, and always replace these covers or panels as soon as possible
- ✗ Use damaged or dirty hearing protection

Topic: Noise & Hearing Protection



BE MINDFUL

- Always follow warning signage and noise protection instructions
- Be aware of your surroundings and wear noise protection when working in noisy environments
- Check your hearing protection before use to ensure there are in good condition

SPEAK OUT

- Report any areas or equipment in the workplace that you believe may be of risk
- Report defective, damaged, or unsuitable PPE as soon as possible for replacement

GET INVOLVED

- Encourage your team to work safely and wear the correct PPE or hearing protection for the task
- Follow the training for the tasks and any instructional signage in the workplace

YOUR VALIDATION

- What are noise levels in the measured in?
- When should action be taken to protect employees from noise exposure?
- Who should you report any concerns workplace noise to?

MORE INFORMATION

- Compass Risk Assessments
- Foodbuy PPE Guide
- HSE Website



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