



Focus on Safety

Hearing Protection Safety – Hear Today, Gone Tomorrow

The consequences of failing to protect your hearing may take years to show up. Prolonged exposure to noise exceeding 85 decibels (dB), can cause permanent hearing loss by damaging the microscopic hair cells inside your ears.

DO:

- Wear hearing protection when the sound level in your workplace exceeds 85 decibels (about the sound of a lawn mower).
- Choose hearing protection that's appropriate for your workplace and for you. Your options are:
 - Ear plugs can be either pre-molded or moldable, disposable or reusable. Ear plugs are inserted to block the ear canal.
 - Ear muffs are made of sound-attenuating material. Ear muffs have soft ear cushions and hard outer cups that are held together by a headband and are fitted over the ear.
- Have your hearing protection fitted properly. The anatomy of the ear and the ear canal is not the same for every person
- Learn how to properly insert ear plugs.
- Check your hearing protection regularly for wear and tear, and replace when needed.
- Use low-noise tools and machinery whenever possible.

DON'T:

- **Don't** use radio headsets in place of hearing protection. They do not protect your ears against noise exposure.
- **Don't** allow hair and clothing to interfere with the fit of the hearing protection.
- **Don't** insert ear plugs with dirty hands, as you can introduce dirt and bacteria into your ears, causing an ear infection.
- **Don't** remove hearing protection for even a short time during noisy work.
- **Don't** assume that because a noise doesn't bother you it isn't causing damage; hearing loss typically does not have any visible effects, such as bleeding or pain.

It is important to remember that hearing protection only protects the individual and only works if worn and used correctly.

Group Questions:

What is the primary source of noise in your work area?

In addition to wearing hearing protection, are there additional opportunities to engineer solutions to reduce noise exposure in your work area?

Where can you find hearing protection and what type is available to you?

Does your hearing protection properly fit?



Focus on Safety Agenda



DEPARTMENT/LOCATION: _____ MEETING DATE: _____
 Meeting Lead By: _____ Time Started: _____
 Title: _____ Time Finished: _____

1. **Open Meeting & Present** Safety Topic: _____
2. **Read** minutes from previous meeting.
3. **Persons present (Print & Sign)**

4. **Updates** – Status of previously presented safety concerns. Discuss any pending items.

5. **Incidents** – Concentrate on accident causes to make everyone more aware. Discuss incidents or near misses that have occurred since the last meeting. Summarize incidents and any injury trends. Review corrective actions that have been taken or are needed.

6. **Inspection/Audits** – Discuss findings and corrective actions of safety inspections made since last meeting.

7. **New Information** – Ask for employee suggestions. Discuss new procedures, safety policy changes, etc.

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