



SAFETY BRIEF

HEARING HAZARDS

Noise-induced hearing loss is the most common work-related injury in the United States, affecting a variety of industries and job categories. Noise exposure over 85 decibels (dB) during an 8-hour work shift can permanently damage your hearing if you don't take the necessary precautions to protect yourself. An extremely loud noise (140 dB or above—think gunshots or a jet engine) could cause permanent hearing damage after only a short exposure. You can save your hearing by being aware of the hazards around you and wearing personal protective equipment when necessary.

MODERATELY LOUD NOISES

Moderately loud noises over a long period of time can be damaging even if they are under 85 dB, including:

- Sanding
- Power washing
- Woodworking
- Drilling
- Truck driving noises

EXTREMELY LOUD NOISES

Extremely loud or painfully loud noises are noises over 85 dB, including:

- Wood chippers
- Hammer drills
- Pneumatic wrenches
- Jackhammers
- Mowers and snowblowers
- Chain saws

PROTECT YOURSELF

Once hearing loss occurs, it's permanent. Protect your hearing by doing the following:

- Reduce the speeds of machines
- Wear earplugs (disposable or reusable) or earmuffs; depending on the noise level, you may need to wear more than one type of protection
- Give your ears a rest by taking frequent breaks
- Complete routine maintenance on machinery and equipment
- Create a barrier between you and the equipment creating the noise
- Use sound-absorbing materials



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