

TOOLBOX TALK #4 NOISE IN THE WORKPLACE – KNOW YOUR LEVELS



OVERVIEW OF TODAY'S TALK



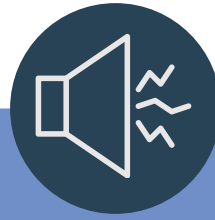
COMMON NOISE LEVELS

Understand typical workplace noise sources and their levels.



CLASS OF HEARING PROTECTION

Choosing the right protection for the noise level.



SAFE WORK TIMES

How long you can work in noisy environments without risk.



REASON FOR THE TOOLBOX

Today's talk is all about understanding noise levels in the workplace. Loud noises are more than just annoying—they can cause permanent hearing damage if you're exposed for too long. By knowing the common noise levels around you, using the right class of hearing protection, and keeping track of safe work times, you'll reduce your risk of hearing loss. It's about protecting your ears now, so you don't have problems later in life.

1. COMMON NOISE LEVELS AND SOUND SOURCES

Different jobs and equipment produce different noise levels. For example, a chainsaw can hit 110 decibels, while normal conversation is around 60 decibels. Even if something doesn't seem too loud at first, long-term exposure can still cause hearing damage. It's important to know what's making the noise around you so you can be sure you're using the right protection. Pay attention to loud machinery and environments, and always assume long exposure is risky.

2. CLASS OF HEARING PROTECTION

Hearing protection isn't one-size-fits-all. The class of protection you need depends on how loud your environment is. If you're working in an area with high noise levels, you'll need higher-rated protection. But using too much protection in quieter areas can stop you from hearing important sounds like alarms or communication from your team. Make sure you select the right class of hearing protection for the noise level to keep your ears safe and stay effective on the job.



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3. SAFE WORK TIMES

Even with protection, there are limits to how long you can be exposed to certain noise levels. For example, at 85 decibels, you can safely work for 8 hours, but at 100 decibels, your safe time drops to just 15 minutes without proper protection. Knowing your safe work times is crucial to avoid exceeding your daily noise exposure limit. Keep track of the noise levels you're working in, and don't stay exposed longer than what's safe, even with hearing protection.

4. RISK ASSESSMENTS AND NOISE LEVELS

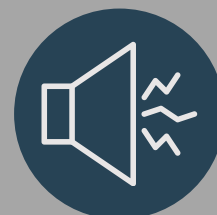
Before starting a job, it's important to assess the noise levels to determine if they pose a hazard. A noise assessment helps identify whether hearing protection is required and what class is needed. These assessments are essential in ensuring you're aware of the risks and have the right controls in place. If noise is a hazard, wearing the proper PPE and sticking to safe work times is critical for avoiding long-term damage.

5. WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW YOUR LEVELS

Understanding noise levels and the limits of your hearing protection can be the difference between protecting your hearing and unknowingly damaging it. Once your hearing is damaged, it's gone for good. By knowing the levels around you, wearing the right class of hearing protection, and sticking to safe work times, you'll keep your hearing sharp and stay safer on the job. Take noise seriously, and don't let a few hours of loud work cause permanent harm.



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