

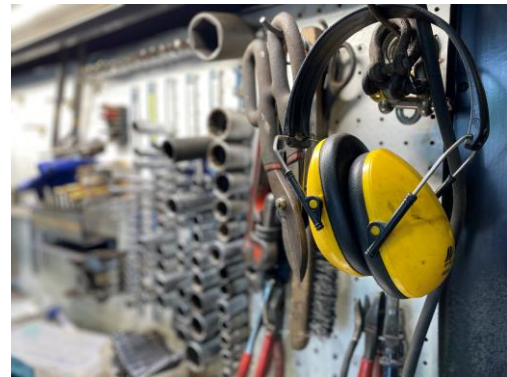
MADE SAFE NL

The Importance of Hearing Conservation

Most sounds that we experience every day are at safe enough levels that do not damage our hearing, such as television, coffee makers or traffic. However, it is not uncommon for our workplaces to have certain pieces of equipment or operations that emit sounds so loud, they become harmful. These sounds can damage sensitive structure in the inner ear and cause noise-induced hearing loss.

Noise-induced hearing loss is usually caused by exposure to excessively loud sounds and cannot be medically or surgically corrected. Noise-induced hearing loss can result from a one-time exposure to a very loud sound, blast, or impulse, or from listening to loud sounds over an extended period.*

In Newfoundland and Labrador, a workplace is required to implement a hearing conservation program when noise levels exceed 85 dB. (As referenced in the ACGIH TLVs)



A **hearing conservation program** includes policies and procedures around elements such as hazard recognition, exposure, control methods, audiometric testing, communication and training.

Associated Risks

- Use of powered tools (i.e., band saw)
- Use of pneumatic tools (i.e., nail gun)
- Use of impact tools (i.e., hammer)
- Wood of plastic processing activities
- Foundry work or metal products manufacturing
- Meatpacking, poultry, fish and food processing activities

Watch out for indications that you may be exposed to dangerous noise levels at work such as shouting in order to be heard by a co-worker in close proximity or ringing or humming in your ears after leaving a noisy work area. Never let your guard down when it comes to your hearing health. Hearing loss lasts a lifetime.

* <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/noise.html>