

October Safety Awareness:

National Protect Your Hearing Month

Did you know that sounds that are too loud for too long can damage your hearing permanently? The louder the noise, the faster it can damage your hearing.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, occupational hearing loss is the most common workplace injury in the U.S. Occupational hearing loss can also cost employers millions of dollars each year, whether it be cost in penalties for not protecting workers from noise or the cost on worker's compensation hearing loss injury claims.

How to protect workers:

Wear **personal protection equipment** such as ear plugs and ear muffs.

Engineering controls involve modifying or replacing equipment:

- Use low -noise tools or machinery
- Maintaining and lubricating machinery and equipment
- Place barrier like a curtain or a sound wall between the noise source and the employee
- Enclose or isolating the noise source

Administrative controls – changes in the workplace or schedule that reduce worker exposure to noise

- Operate noisy machines when fewer workers are present
- Limit the amount of time, a worker is exposed to the hazard
- Provide a quiet rest area for workers to remove themselves from the noise
- Move employees farther from the noise source.

This is also a perfect time to ensure your hearing conservation program is in top shape. Visit LNI website for more information:

<https://www.lni.wa.gov/Safety/Topics/AtoZ/NoiseHearing/>



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