



# Weekly Safety Meeting



Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Noise: Have You Heard?

*Courtesy of State Compensation Insurance Fund*

What's the difference between sound and noise? Noise, is unwanted sound. It's unwanted because it can cause hearing loss, keep you from hearing people talk or hearing emergency sounds. In the workplace, it can also disrupt job performance and cause stress-related problems, like cardiovascular changes, fatigue, irritability, and tension. Fortunately, there are ways to reduce noise levels and protect worker hearing.

In construction, there are many potential sources of noise. It can come from circular saws, grinders, compressors, lift trucks, transportation equipment, and air or electric power tools. Both the amount of noise and the length of exposure affect its ability to damage hearing. Engineering controls are considered the first line of defense against high noise levels because they can eliminate or reduce noise at the source. Such controls might include proper maintenance of machinery to eliminate excessive noise; mufflers, noise bafflers or enclosures for noisy equipment; placement of noisy machinery away from workers; or buying tools designed to operate more quietly.

If engineering controls are not possible because of cost or the nature of the noise source, then administrative controls are an option. These controls include scheduling noisy operations.

Another option is to provide personal hearing protection devices such as earplugs or earmuffs. In order to determine the best protection for the situation, a safety professional should examine the noise hazards and the work environment. In some high-noise situations, the use of double protection like both earplugs and earmuffs might be appropriate. But, whatever device is chosen, workers should be given instructions on how to properly use the device, how to care for it, and when to replace it.

The State Compensation Insurance Fund has developed an Occupational Hearing Conservation Program (OHCP) booklet and DVD that is available to its insureds. The program's Employer Compliance Kit describes all aspects of an OHCP including the dangers of noise exposure, employer responsibilities, noise control information, protection options, audiometric testing, and recordkeeping. It has everything you'll need to tailor a program to your company's specific circumstances.

Finally, it's important for employers and workers to remember the four "Ps" of occupational hearing loss...it's painless, progressive, permanent – but most important – it's preventable. You've heard it here...don't risk the loss of worker hearing when it can be easily protected and preserved.

Special Topics For Your Project: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Employee Safety Recommendations: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Meeting Attended By: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Supervisors Signature: \_\_\_\_\_