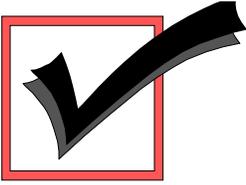


## **Section 4: Tailgate Guides**

- SBCTC-LOHP Noise Safety Walkaround Checklist
- SBCTC-LOHP Noise Training Guide
- CPWR Toolbox Talk, Hearing Protection
- Hearing Protection, Safety Break #9, OHB



# SAFETY WALKAROUND CHECKLIST NOISE

Rev. 2015

All companies must have a written Injury and Illness Prevention Program (IIPP) that meets all Cal/OSHA requirements. The IIPP must include identification of noise hazards on the site, regular inspections, accident investigation, and correction of hazardous conditions. [1509]

Date Prepared: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Name/No: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

- **Check the box if the statement is true.**
- **Fill in the blanks where the  appears.**

## NOTES

### HAZARD IDENTIFICATION, REDUCTION, AND WORKER TRAINING

Operations or equipment that are likely to produce a noise hazard have been identified [1509]

Has noise monitoring been done on this site?  Yes  No  
Results (date, locations and dB levels):



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Workers have been informed of the results of noise monitoring performed on themselves, in their work area, and/or for their trade. [3204(e)(2)(A)]

Exposure has been reduced as much as possible by providing quieter equipment, modifying processes, installing sound barriers, or rotating employees. [5096(b)]

Workers have been trained about the hazards of noise exposure and the means they can take to prevent hearing loss. [1509]

***EAR PROTECTION***

- If employees may be exposed to noise in excess of the Cal/OSHA permissible exposure limit (PEL) of 90 dB, appropriate ear protection is provided and workers are required to use it. [1521 and 5096(b)]
  
- The ear protection provided (ear plugs, ear muffs, etc.) is effective—it is sufficient to reduce noise exposure to a level below the PEL. [5096(b)]
  
- If disposable ear plugs are used, a sufficient supply is kept on site. OSHA recommends that workers are instructed to change earplugs after each use.
  
- Ear protection devices fit the worker and are reasonably comfortable. [1514]

*Locations where hearing protectors are available on this site:*

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# **SAFETY WALKAROUND CHECKLIST GENERAL INSPECTION**

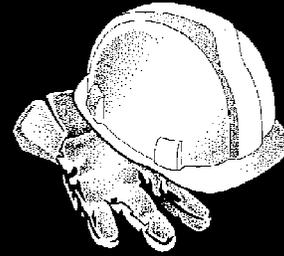
<i>Other Hazards Noted</i>	<i>Action</i>

***Near Miss Reports:***

***Other:***

# TRAINING GUIDE

## NOISE



Rev. 2015

*Before you begin the meeting...*

- Does this topic relate to the work the crew is doing? If not, choose another topic.*
- Did you read this Training Guide and fill in the blanks where the  appears? (To find the information you need, look over the Safety Walkaround Checklist for this topic.)*
- Did you bring samples of hearing protection devices (earplugs and/or earmuffs) to show the crew during the meeting?*

*Begin: (Try mouthing the words to your introduction instead of speaking out loud, so the crew can imagine what it's like when someone can't hear.)*

Do you ask people to speak louder so you can hear? Do you have to turn the TV or radio up so loud that other people complain? Years of work on a construction site can rob you of your hearing. These may be your warning signs that something is wrong.

Don't wait until you lose your hearing to do something about it. Hearing loss usually occurs little by little, but once it's lost you'll never get it back.

*You or a crew member may want to add a personal story about noise or hearing loss.*

*Next, discuss with the crew what jobs and equipment may cause excessive noise at this particular job site:*



### ASK THE CREW THESE QUESTIONS:

*After each question, give the crew time to suggest possible answers. Use the information following each question to add points that no one mentions.*

- 1. True or False? Even if your hearing gets bad, all you need is some time off the job and it will come back.**
  - False! It's true that many construction workers experience **temporary** hearing loss, which clears up if you're off the job for a while. But noise can also cause **permanent** hearing loss. With this kind, you never get back to normal. Even a hearing aid won't help much. That's why it's so important to protect yourself from noise.

**2. Don't you have to work in construction for a long time to get permanent hearing loss?**

- Not always. A very loud noise can begin to damage your hearing right away, even if you're only exposed to it for a short time.

**3. So is noise dangerous only if it's very loud?**

- No. A moderate level of noise can also cause permanent hearing loss if you're exposed to it day after day for a period of months or years. It can damage your hearing gradually, even if it doesn't seem that loud to you.
- The louder the noise and the longer you are exposed, the greater is the permanent damage to your hearing.

**4. Noise is measured in *decibels (dB)*. A noise above 120 dB is so loud that it causes pain in your ears. Cal/OSHA says no worker may be exposed to more than 90 dB, as an average over an 8-hour shift. This is called the *permissible exposure limit (PEL)* for noise. What are some examples of noise on a construction site that might be over 90 dB?**

- Heavy trucks (around 100 decibels)
- Power saws (around 110 decibels)
- Riveting on steel (around 130 decibels)

**5. What if you only work around loud noise for a short time—not eight hours a day? What do Cal/OSHA regulations say about that?**

- Depending on how loud the noise is determines the amount of time Cal/OSHA says you can be exposed. The louder the noise, the shorter the time you can work in the area without damaging your hearing.

**6. What are some clues that there might be too much noise on the job?**

- As a rule of thumb, the decibel level **could** be above the legal limit if you have to raise your voice to be heard one foot away.
- Other signs of too much noise are **temporary hearing loss** or **ringing in the ears**.
- Everyone is different. Some workers will experience hearing loss even if noise is below the legal limit. Since there's no way of telling if you're the one whose hearing will be the first to go, it's best to avoid noise exposure whenever possible.
- If there's any reason to think the noise level may be too high, the company can have the level measured with instruments. This is called **noise monitoring**.

On this job we  have or  have not done noise monitoring.

*Results (locations and dB levels):* \_\_\_\_\_



\_\_\_\_\_

**7. What does Cal/OSHA require us to do to protect against noise?**

- **Use quieter equipment** when possible—quieter models are available nowadays.
- **Reduce noise exposure** as much as possible by using sound barriers, different work processes, or regular rotation of workers out of noisy areas.
- **Use effective hearing protection** (like ear plugs or ear muffs) when needed.

- **Train** workers on:
  - the hazards of noise
  - ways to prevent hearing loss
  - how to wear ear protectors, change them, and clean them (if applicable).

### 8. When do you need to use hearing protection?

- You need it whenever noise levels are above the Cal/OSHA limit. But rules on ear protection should be reasonable. Sometimes you need it and sometimes you don't.
- The company is responsible for supplying and maintaining hearing protectors.

NOTE: One make, model, style may not be appropriate for all workers.

*Show the crew the ear plugs and ear muffs you brought to the meeting. **Demonstrate** how to use them. Explain where they are kept and any special instructions.*



### 9. Aren't ear plugs uncomfortable? Can't it be dangerous to use them?

- Ear plugs don't have to be uncomfortable. Cal/OSHA says that the company should make sure ear protectors fit you and are reasonably comfortable.
- Some workers believe that wearing ear plugs is awkward or even dangerous because you can't hear voices, alarms, and warnings. But:
  - Ear plugs don't block out all sound—you should still be able to hear loud voices or warning noises.
  - Better methods of communication and warning can be used on the site, like louder signals or flashing lights.
  - Some new hearing protectors contain a microphone. It reduces loud noises but lets normal voices and warning sounds through.

### CAL/OSHA REGULATIONS

*Explain:* Most of the safety measures we've talked about are required by Cal/OSHA. We have to take these precautions—it's the law. I have a Checklist of the Cal/OSHA regulations on noise. If you'd like to know more, see me after the meeting.

### COMPANY RULES

*(Only if applicable.)* Besides the Cal/OSHA regulations, we have some additional company rules about noise.

*Discuss company rules:* \_\_\_\_\_



### COMMENTS FROM THE CREW

**Ask:** Do you have any other concerns about noise? Do you see any problems on our job? *(Let the steward answer first, if there is one.)*

**What about other jobs you've worked on? Have you had any experience with noise that might help us work safer on this job?**

## GENERAL SAFETY DISCUSSION

*This is a time to discuss all safety concerns, not just today's topic. Keep your notes on this page before, during, and after the safety meeting.*

**Are you aware of any hazards from other crews?** *Point out any hazards other crews are creating that this crew should know about. Tell the crew what you intend to do about those hazards.*

**Do we have any old business?** *Discuss past issues/problems. Report progress of investigations and action taken.*

**Any new business? Any accidents/near misses/complaints?** *Discuss accidents, near misses, and complaints that have happened since the last safety meeting. Also recognize the safety contributions made by members of the crew.*

**Please remember, we want to hear from you about *any* health and safety issues that come up. If we don't know about problems, we can't take action to fix them.**

*To complete the training session:*

- Circulate Sign-Off Form.*
- Assign one or more crew member(s) to help with next safety meeting.*
- Refer action items for follow-up. (Use the sample **Hazard Report Form** in the Reference Section of this binder, or your company's own form.)*





# Hearing Protection

*If you are exposed to too much noise, you can lose your hearing - and your life. On the job, too much noise can distract you. You may not hear warnings. Noise also damages the nerves in the inner ears. Those nerves cannot be repaired.*

## Here is an Example

Richard was a laborer jackhammering concrete on a 16-month road job. The daily noise was so loud that he could not hear the people speak around him. After the job ended, he had his hearing tested and found that he had permanent partial hearing loss.

- 1. Have you experienced hearing loss from being around loud noise at work?**
- 2. If so, were you comfortable with telling your supervisor directly?**
- 3. Are you aware of different actions you can take to decrease hearing loss?**

## Preventing Hearing loss

- Use comfortable hearing protection such as ear muffs and ear plugs.
- Be sure you've been trained to properly insert disposable foam ear plugs.
- Avoid inserting or removing ear plugs if your hands are dirty. Better to clean first.
- Take breaks from loud noise even if protective gear is worn.
- Identify equipment and work areas where signs can be posted to make other workers aware of high noise areas.
- Use a jackhammering attachment on an excavator to keep the worker farther from the noise source.
- Move noise sources such as compressors away from the workers.

## What Are We Going to Do Today?

What will we do here at the worksite today to prevent hearing loss?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

OSHA STANDARD: 1926.52



# Hearing Protection



- Be sure you've been trained to properly insert disposable foam ear plugs.
- Identify equipment and work areas where signs can be posted to make other workers aware of high noise areas.
- Move noise sources such as compressors away from the workers.

# ▶ HEARING PROTECTION

## Things to Do Before Training

- ▶ Know which types of hearing protection are supplied by the company or brought to the job site by workers.
- ▶ Know whether there are any company rules about wearing hearing protection for specific tasks.
- ▶ In the index of the *Cal/OSHA Pocket Guide for the Construction Industry*, look up **Hearing Protection** and read the pages listed.

## Introduction

Over time, exposure to loud noise decreases our ability to hear. Older workers can start to feel lonely and frustrated as hearing loss over the years makes it tough to communicate with coworkers, family, and friends.

We should always reduce noise as much as possible by choosing quieter equipment, using sound barriers, or limiting time in noisy areas. But when noise levels are still high, **hearing protection** – plugs or muffs – must be worn.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

- ▶ Do you know any construction workers with hearing loss? How does this affect their lives?
- ▶ What are the types of hearing protection we can use on this job?
- ▶ What are the noisy tasks and equipment on this job site where you should wear hearing protection?
- ▶ Can you think of ways we can improve our use of hearing protection?

SAFETY  BREAK

## ACTIONS TO TAKE

- ▶ Check to see whether all crew members who may be overexposed to noise have hearing protection on hand and use it properly.
- ▶ If suitable hearing protection is not available for everyone, get the company to order and/or distribute what is needed.

## Key Points to Keep in Mind

- If noise causes you to yell to communicate, you should be using hearing protection.
- If you ever go home hearing a ringing or whooshing noise that goes away after an hour or two, this is a sign that you've been overexposed.
- Hearing loss is **permanent and 100% preventable**.
- Overexposure to noise can occur quickly** from short exposure to very loud noise (for example, 15 minutes with a gas-powered quick-cut saw will lead to overexposure for that day).
- Most power tools and equipment used in construction operate over 85 decibels (dBA).
- Using hearing protection consistently can slow down or stop hearing loss.
- The company should offer **several types and sizes** of hearing protectors so employees can use what fits and works best.
- A competent person should help employees choose and fit** hearing protectors and train them on appropriate use.

### Ear Muffs

- Use for intermittent noise; easy to take on and off.
- Replace cushions every year to ensure protection.
- Be sure eyeglasses or respirators don't prevent a good seal.
- Keep tension in the headband tight enough to seal well without being uncomfortable.



### Ear Plugs

- Choose a size that fits comfortably.
- Read instructions on proper insertion and train employees.
- Be sure hands are clean when inserting.
- Use disposables only once.

