



### Instructor Guide

#### Noise exposure

##### Topic Overview (why the topic is important to the students)

Noise from power tools may reach harmful levels that can cause hearing loss. Exposure to sound over 85 decibels over an 8-hour period requires hearing protection, and employers are required to inform workers if sound levels are at 82 decibels or above. Noise-induced hearing loss is the most prevalent occupational disease. Approximately ¼ million BC workers are exposed to workplace noise sufficient to cause occupational hearing loss. Hearing loss can be very gradual, usually happening over a number of years.

##### Demonstration and Discussion Topics

- **Discuss** the hazards in the shop that may produce noise over 85 decibels and how hearing loss can occur if hearing protection is not used.
- **Discuss** the different types of hearing protection.
- **Tour the shop** with the students, pointing out the hazards, and which type of hearing protection would be required for each.
- **Distribute** the student handout.
- **Review** the safety tips.
- **Explain** what can be done in the workplace to minimize the risk of exposure to noise (e.g., sound barriers, tool selection, and signage).
- **Make it real.** Tell at least two stories of hearing loss from your experience or use the following examples:
  - A woodworker who chose not to use hearing protection was denied compensation for his hearing loss experienced after 22 years of work.
  - After 25 years as a carpenter, a worker had severe hearing loss, particularly for high-pitched voices, making workplace communication difficult.

- **Discuss** the attitude that “it won’t happen to me”. Remind them that hearing loss can and will happen if they don’t protect their hearing.
- **Instruct** the students to identify and report any safety concerns about noise hazards.
- **Answer** any questions or concerns they might have.
- **Set a good example** by working safely at all times.

##### Resources

- Hear for Good – preventing exposure at work  
[http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/health\\_and\\_safety/by\\_topic/assets/pdf/hear\\_for\\_good.pdf](http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/hear_for_good.pdf)
- Hearing loss prevention programs  
[http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/health\\_and\\_safety/by\\_topic/assets/pdf/sound\\_advice.pdf](http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/sound_advice.pdf)