

Workplace Hazards: Protecting Your Ears

Noise pollution is one of the most common occupational hazards in the American workplace. You only have one pair of ears. Take care of them by following some simple precautions.

Noise pollution in the workplace

Is your workplace so loud that you have to raise your voice to be heard? When you leave work and are in a quieter environment, do your ears feel plugged or do you hear a mild ringing or other unnatural noise? If the answer is yes, your hearing may already be at risk.

Excessive noise levels over a long period of time will damage your hearing so gradually and painlessly that you may not notice until it's too late. Sudden explosive sounds, such as gunshots, can also cause immediate damage. Approximately 30 million Americans are exposed to hazardous noise at work. For many this has resulted in permanent hearing loss.

Protecting your hearing

You can protect yourself from such hazards to minimize the risk. Wear hearing protection devices, such as ear plugs or ear muffs. Don't wait until it's too late. See if your company has health screenings or see your doctor if you suspect you are at risk of damage.