EXPOSURE RATES AND EFFECTS:

Construction workers have been exposed to hazardous noise of noise-exposed tested construction workers have hearing impairment in both ears of noise-exposed tested construction workers have a material hearing impairment (impacts day-to-day activities).

DURATION OF EXPOSURE AND PROXIMITY TO THE SOURCE ARE KEY FACTORS THAT IMPACT THE EFFECT OF NOISE ON HEARING:

Construction workers experience the second highest rate of occupational exposure to noise hazards.

Common Construction Noise Hazards:

- Regular 8-hour exposures to 85 dBA can damage hearing.
- Repeated exposures of just 1 hr/day to 100 dBA noise can damage hearing.
- Construction sites are noisy no matter what precautions are taken.
- The jobs conducted and tools used vary within a shift or project – so do the noise hazards.
- Impact-noise exposures are plentiful.
- It’s challenging to train and fit a part-time or transient workforce with hearing protection.
- Site managers are often responsible for mandating hearing protection.

CFR 1926.101: OSHA’s regulation for hearing protection in construction. It states that whenever noise levels or duration of exposures exceed 85 dBA in an 8-hour time-weighted average, ear-protective devices shall be provided and used. Ear-protective devices inserted in the ear shall be fitted or determined individually by competent persons.

Yet, more than 35% of noise-exposed construction workers report not wearing protective devices.

Noise Induced Hearing Loss is fully preventable, here is how:

EXPOSURE RATES AND EFFECTS:

- 51% of construction workers have been exposed to hazardous noise.
- 25% of noise-exposed tested construction workers have hearing impairment (impacts day-to-day activities).
- 16% of noise-exposed tested construction workers have hearing difficulty.
- 14% of construction workers have temporary hearing loss.
- 7% of construction workers have permanent hearing loss.

TIIPS FOR PROTECTING CONSTRUCTION WORKERS’ HEARING:

- Be mindful of communication needs among workers and provide them with comfortable, convenient and compatible hearing protection solutions.
- Educate teams on site-specific noise hazards, invite safety specialists to speak on hearing protection, and encourage compliance through positive incentives.
- Hold free training classes on hearing protection and how to achieve a reliable, comfortable fit and encourage peer-to-peer support for using protective devices.

VARIous TYPES OF PROTECTION DESIGNED FOR SPECIFIC CONDITIONS:

- Disposable Foam Earplugs – for comfort and greater protection
- Reusable earplugs – for ease of insertion and reuse
- Banded earplugs – for lower-level intermittent noise
- Passive Earmuffs – for hearing protection
- Electronic earmuffs – for communication or impact noise

Noise Induced Hearing Loss is fully preventable, here is how:

- Be mindful of communication needs among workers.
- Educate teams on site-specific noise hazards and invite safety specialists to speak on hearing protection.
- Hold free training classes on hearing protection and how to achieve a reliable, comfortable fit and encourage peer-to-peer support for using protective devices.

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