

IMPORTANT POINTS

As much as it's important for time cards to be handed in on time, it's as important that they are properly filled-in and signed by your supervisor at work. You have in your employment kit a copy of a time card as it should be filled-in. Please refer to this example. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to ask either Jean Beauchamp or Natalie Ferguson.

Some of you are handing in timecards late and some extreme cases almost a month old. This is causing problems for our payroll / accounting department. Our clients also expect to have their invoices in a timely fashion and in order for this to occur, you must hand in your timecards regularly. Furthermore, handing in your timecards on weekly basis means you will receive your pay every week.

All incidents or accidents that happen while at work and because of the work that you are doing have to be reported to LaborTek Immediately **WITHOUT EXCEPTIONS**

Have a warm, safe, and healthy month of March!

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Hearing Safety

Like aging, noise-induced hearing loss generally occurs gradually. The first few times you attended a loud rock concert, you may have noticed ringing in your ears or felt that it seemed "too quiet" outside afterwards.

In reality, the rock concert caused a temporary threshold shift - a diminished ability to hear for a period following exposure to loud noise. Half an hour later, you probably noticed it was no longer quiet; you regained your full hearing ability.

However, with repeated exposures to noise over 85 decibels (about as loud as traffic on a busy street), hearing can become permanently damaged. The louder the noise, the sooner damage will occur.

You may protect your hearing on the job, but your ears don't discriminate between a screaming power saw and a screaming rock singer. Excessive noise of any kind damages hearing.

Plugged Into Hearing Loss

Media players with "ear-bud"-type headphones can damage your hearing. The old "muff"-type foam headphones of the early disc players left an airspace between the sensitive inner ear and the speaker. But modern earphones fit tightly into the ear canal, sending high-intensity sound directly into the aural chamber. Continuous listening, even at a reasonable volume, can damage delicate inner-ear hair cells. It's estimated that 12.5 percent of kids aged 6 to 19 have some degree of noise-induced hearing loss.

According to Christine Albertus, an Audiologist at Marshfield Clinic in Wisconsin, "They're fine to use, just limit the volume and amount of time you listen." She recommends a maximum of two hours per day and adds: "If the person beside you can hear your music, it's too loud."

Did You Know?

Ten percent of the population has a hearing loss affecting the ability to understand what others are saying?

One in four workers in North America is exposed to potentially damaging noise levels on the job.

Normal conversation has a sound pressure level (SPL) of about 60 decibels (dB). A whisper is heard at about 30 dB. A jet taking off at close range can hit 140 dB.

Loss of high frequency hearing distorts sound, causing people to have trouble distinguishing between similar sounding words such as "stone" and "bone."

How Can I Protect the Hearing I Have Left?

Wear foam earplugs when attending off-the-job events such as concerts or car races.

Never sit near loudspeakers in a club. Learn where the "volume down" button is on your remote control. Get to know it by feel.

Use hearing protection when operating a lawnmower, chainsaw or leaf blower.

Use hearing protection when hunting or target shooting.

Most of us take our sense of hearing for granted—we assume that we hear what everyone else hears. Loss of hearing may not be realized until a friend or spouse screams in frustration, "Why don't you ever listen to me!!" This is because hearing loss is usually gradual. Normally, it doesn't hurt, so we don't know it's happening. Yet our ability to hear when we want to is precious and must be protected.

The critical sound level when hearing protection should be worn is 85 decibels (dBA), established for an 8-hour time weighted average. The louder and longer your exposure, whether at work, at home, or during recreation,

the more likely your hearing will be damaged.

If you want to have a sense of "how loud is loud," the following examples, along with their decibel rating, will give you an idea:

Decibels

- 30-40 quiet pleasant sounds, a bird chirping
- 40-50 quiet to normal office sounds
- 50-60 normal conversation
- 70-90 heavy machinery, electric motors, garbage disposal, city traffic
- 100-120 jack hammer, power saw, motorcycle, lawn mower, rock music
- 140+ nearly jet engine, gun shot (this level causes pain)

Many disposable or reusable plugs are available and reduce noise by about 30-33 decibels. This is the Noise Reduction Rating (NRR) you see on the box. However, since the NRR is established in a laboratory with perfectly fitted plugs, experts recommend that the true rating is generally about 7 decibels less than indicated. Hearing protectors of the ear muff type are usually closer to the actual NRR.

The key to effectively protecting your hearing is to properly wear your ear protection. Too often earplugs are seen just barely pushed in. Ensure you wear your earplugs as they were intended. Roll up the foam plugs and make sure you insert them all the way in your ear canal. **It's for your hearing . . . and your protection.**