



How Do We Protect Our Hearing Now?

The best way to protect your hearing now is to wear personal protective equipment (PPE).

If you must shout to talk with someone 3 feet away, you need ear protection.



Use the PPE provided by your employer. Notify your employer if the PPE is not proper. Make sure your PPE fits and is comfortable. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for use.



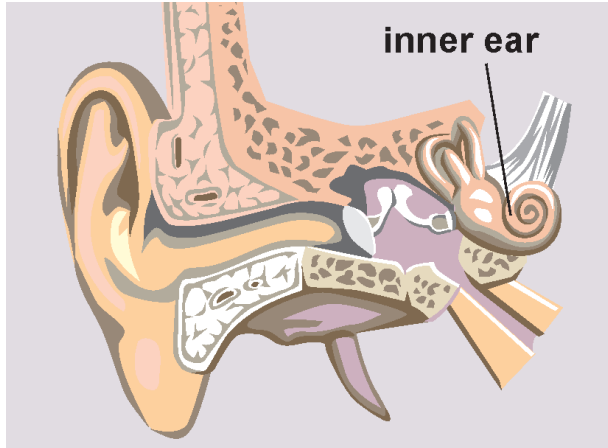
Get a baseline hearing test. Then, get a hearing test about once a year so you'll know your hearing protection is working. Hearing loss can occur gradually and you may not notice it if you don't get tested.

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Noise Hazards



Is Too Much Noise a Serious Problem?



If you are exposed to too much noise, you can lose your hearing — and you can lose 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. These nerves cannot be repaired.

After 15 to 20 years in the trade:

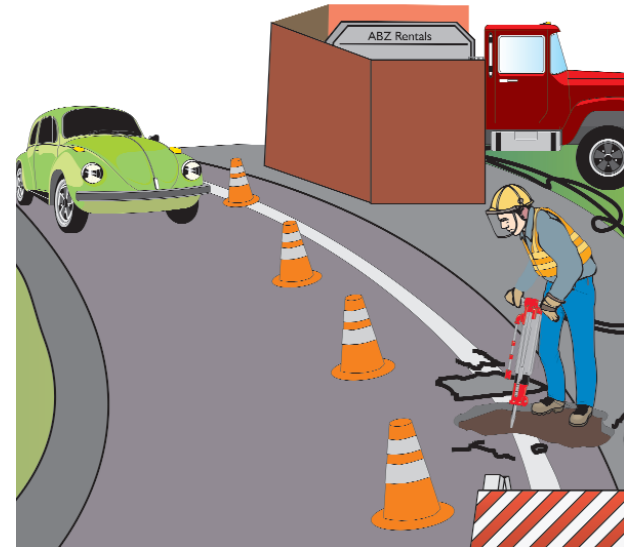
- You may suffer permanent hearing loss.
- You may hear constant ringing in your ears (tinnitus).

If you suffer hearing loss, you cannot hear well — especially when there is background noise. Hearing loss can adversely affect your family and personal life.

What Noise Sources Are Most Common?

There are many noise sources in road construction. Some of the most common include:

- heavy equipment,
- pile driving,
- pavement breakers,
- traffic.



Could Road Work Be Less Noisy?

Yes. There are efforts to make it quieter. Noise levels can be reduced by:

- Buy or rent quieter equipment.
- Keep equipment well maintained.
- Move noisy equipment away from workers.
- Put sound barriers around equipment.