

Noise Controls

When controlling exposure to noise in the workplace, employers should look at putting control measures in place to ensure the safety and health of employees. The following hierarchy outlines how this can be done.

1. Elimination of noise

Completely removing the noise hazard is the best way to eliminate the risk. Examples are:

- Purchasing equipment which emits low levels of noise
- Removing noisy equipment, machinery away from work areas

2. Substitution of noisy machinery and equipment for less noisy types.

3. Engineering controls such as:

- Putting partitions in open plan areas to act as noise barriers
- Covering, insulating noisy parts of equipment
- Using sound absorbing materials in the workplace (carpet, acoustic tiles, double-glazing, etc.)

4. Administrative controls such as:

- Appropriate training and information
- Job-rotation to ensure employees are not working in a noisy area for long periods

5. Individual PPE

PPE is always the last resort. PPE should be used in conjunction with a number of control measures similar to those outlined above.

The PPE you provide must be:



- Provided and maintained in a safe manner
- Appropriate to the task
- Appropriate to the employee

Do:

- ✓ Warn employees and others if they are entering hazardous noise areas
- ✓ Provide clear signage in hazardous noise areas
- ✓ Provide ear-defenders, regular and customised ear-plug where required
- ✓ Place noisy machines and equipment away from employees where possible



Do not neglect your hearing: noise-induced hearing loss cannot be cured!