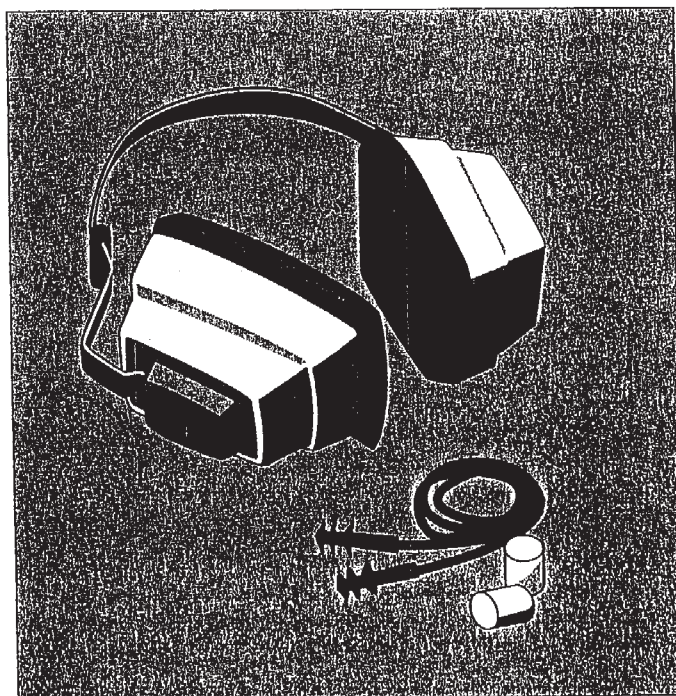




Hearing Protection

- ☛ **Hearing protection is often overlooked as a form of personal protective equipment (PPE), but your hearing needs to be protected as much as your eyesight or any part of your body.**
 - Unlike other injuries, such as cuts and broken bones, hearing losses often take time to develop.
 - You may feel like you are used to the high noises associated with construction. But even if the noise doesn't bother you, you are still at risk of developing a hearing loss.
 - As people get older their hearing degenerates, which means it gets weaker. Hearing aids can amplify the sounds they hear. Hearing loss on the job is destructive, which means that the ear is being injured, not just weakened. Hearing aids cannot compensate for this type of hearing loss.
 - All styles of hearing protection have noise reduction ratings (NRR). The higher this number is, the better protection your device provides. NRR's can be found on the hearing protector's packaging.
- ☛ **One type of hearing protection commonly used in construction is the type that is worn in the ear.**
 - This type is generally disposable expandable foam or the reusable fitted type.
 - Don't reuse disposable plugs.
 - It is important to read and follow all instructions when wearing disposable foam. Disposable foam requires the plug to be rolled between the fingers, inserted into the ear canal, and held in place until the foam is fully expanded.
 - Reusable plugs should be cleaned each time they are removed from the ear.
- ☛ **Another type of hearing protection used in construction is the type that is worn over the ear (called ear muffs).**
 - These can be mounted directly onto hard hats.
 - The ear muffs generally offer a slightly higher degree of protection than the type worn in the ear.

Hearing protection should be used whenever loud equipment, such as roof cutters or cut-off saws, are operated.



Hearing Protection Training Tips

- Have a sample of each type of hearing protection available.
- Practice inserting disposable foam plugs according to the directions from the manufacturer, and then demonstrate it to the participants.
- If foam plugs are used on the job, have each participant insert a pair into their ears.
- Ask the following questions:
 - What does NRR stand for?
 - Is it preferable to have a high NRR value, or a low one?