



Noise



What is the problem with noise?

NOISE - often explained as being a sound that is unwanted by the listener. Noise is part of everyday life, but loud noise can permanently damage your hearing. Conversation becomes difficult or impossible; your family complains about the television being too loud and you have trouble using the telephone.

Permanent tinnitus (ringing in the ears) can also be caused. The damage can be instant, for very loud or explosive noises, but generally it is gradual. By the time you notice it, it is probably too late.

- Do you have to raise your voice to have a normal conversation when about 2 m apart for at least part of the day?
- Do you use noisy powered tools or machinery for over half an hour a day?



Typical noise levels

What do I have to look out for?

Noise causes more off site complaints than any other topic and can rapidly turn relations sour.



Noise

By the very nature of the work we carry out on a construction site noise will be generated but there are ways we can minimise the problem.

- Do not work outside the times stated – these times usually form part of the planning permission.
- Avoid shouting (including swearing).
- Don't rev plant.
- Avoid leaving items of plant and equipment running when not in use.
- Do not have radios "blaring"

Avoiding Noise problems on site:

- ☐ Keep noisy plant away from public areas – is there an alternative e.g. using battery operated traffic lights instead of generator powered.
- ☐ Remain on haul roads and keep haul road well maintained.
- Shut down plant when not in use or introduce a "no idling" policy.
- Maintain plant well.

Hearing protection such as earmuffs and earplugs is your last line of defence against damage, so check the following:

Earmuffs Make sure they totally cover your ears, fit tightly and there are no gaps around the seals. Do not let hair, jewellery, glasses, etc interfere with the seal. Try and keep the seals and the insides clean. Don't stretch the headband too much – make sure it keeps its tension. The headband is designed to be on top of the head – not round your neck. If you need to wear a safety helmet as well get ear muffs that clip onto the hat.

Earplugs They can be difficult to fit properly – practise fitting them and get help if you are having trouble.

Often they can look like they are fitted properly, but they may not be giving you much protection. Clean your hands before you fit earplugs, and do not share them.

Noise levels guide

The noise is intrusive but normal conversation is possible	80 dB
You have to shout to talk to someone 2 metres away - <i>the 2m rule</i>	85 dB
You have to shout to talk to someone 1 metre away	90 dB
Hearing protection to be available	80 dB(A) and 112 Pa
Ensure hearing protection is worn	85 dB(A) and 140 Pa selected to eliminate risk or reduce to a minimum



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ACTION LEVELS FOR PERSONAL HEARING PROTECTION

ITEMS IN RED REQUIRE HEARING PROTECTION TO BE USED

	Point of Use	1M	5M
Mini Excavator	76db	78db	69db
Forklift R. Terrain	80db	87db	82db
Generator 3kva	96db	92db	85db
Generator 5 kva	87db	85db	80db
Stihl Saw	102db	98db	95db
Table Saw (wood)	100db	98db	94db
JCB 360	75db	82db	80db
Kango Hammer (breaking concrete)	102db	101db	97db
Hilti TE 72	93db	91db	87db
Hammer Drill	101db	99db	93db
4 WD Dumper	78db	80db	75db
Vibrating Poker Machine	89db	87db	82db
Hand Held 9 Inch Saw (cutting)	102db	100db	98db
Tandem Roller	82db	80db	75db
Wacker Plate 24 Inch	89db	87db	81db

Remember – there is NO satisfactory treatment for noise induced hearing loss.

PROTECT YOUR HEARING – IT IS PRECIOUS