

THE

CONNECTION

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Noise Related Hearing Loss

Sound is measured in decibels. An average conversation is about 60 decibels. A loud conversation in a crowded building is about 70 decibels. Your ears can be damaged by prolonged exposure to 90 decibels or louder.

If you are exposed to loud power tools or engines, loud music, firearms or other equipment that produces loud noises, you should take the following precautions:

Wear protective earplugs or earmuffs. Use commercially made protection devices that meet federal standards (cotton balls will not work, and they could get stuck in your ears). These bring most loud sounds down to acceptable levels. You can obtain custom-molded earplugs made of plastic or rubber to effectively protect against excessive noise.

Have your hearing tested. Early detection of hearing loss can prevent future, irreversible damage.

Use ear protection off the job. Protect your ears from any loud recreational activities, such as loud music at concerts, trapshooting or driving snowmobiles.

Beware of recreational risks. Sensorineural hearing loss related to recreation is becoming more common. Activities with the greatest risk are trapshooting, driving snowmobiles, and some other recreational vehicles and, particularly, listening to extremely loud music.

GIVE WORKERS A PAT ON THE BACK

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by Mark Lester

I have been fortunate to work and associate with the builders of our country's infrastructure. It is easy in today's political climate to overlook or even blame the American worker for current economic conditions but I do not agree and am of the opinion the American worker is still the most skilled and dedicated in the world.

I have been lucky to work with ironworkers, carpenters, cement workers, mechanics, truck drivers, operating engineers, etc. I have nothing but respect for these guys and gals.

This year is the 50th anniversary of the Mackinac Bridge and it is important to remember that after the plans were made and the prints were drawn, it came down to the guy with the spud wrench and the rivet gun to put it all together. Without the American workers, this bridge could not have been built, nor any other engineering marvel in our great country, i.e. Empire State Building, Golden Gate Bridge, Hoover Dam, Sears Tower or the entire interstate highway system. You name it, it wouldn't be here if it weren't for the abilities and sweat of the American worker.

Not only were these workers instrumental in the construction of our infrastructure, they were also there in our darkest hours. I read an article about the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, specifically about the rescue and clean-up efforts. Ironworkers who built the building offered their services to the fire department to shore up the structure and make it safe for rescue efforts.

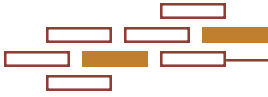
At first the fire department declined the offer because of safety concerns, but soon realized how precarious the structure was and allowed the ironworkers to shore up the building and assist in the rescue. After the World Trade Center attack, construction workers were once again on the scene assisting in clean-up and rescue efforts.

Today, I am fortunate to work with the guys and gals who maintain our highway system and keep our road clear of snow and ice in the winter. Without their dedicated efforts, commerce in Michigan would grind to a halt during winter and the rest of us could not travel to grandmother's house for Christmas dinner.

This Labor Day, take time to truly appreciate the American worker and all they have done. Give each other a pat on the back for a job well done.

Mark Lester resides in Richland





Don't forget to clean your safety glasses before you put them on.



A typical fire door is made so that it will automatically close when the temperature in its vicinity rises to a specified level. Once a fire door has closed, it can prevent a fire in one room from spreading to another room for up to three hours, depending on the rating of the fire door and the intensity of the fire. During that time, automatic sprinklers and other firefighting devices can put out or cool down the fire.

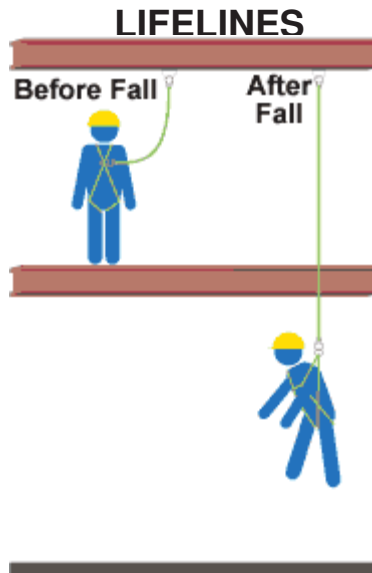
A fire door does not work like magic, however. It has to be in proper operating condition, and it has to have unobstructed space around it to be able to close in case of fire.

So be smart, and take the following precautions;

Make sure that fire door openings and the area surrounding them are clear. Never store flatbacks, pallets, stakes, or other objects near them, even temporarily. A fire can start in seconds. Always keep an eye out for small articles, a strip of lumber, a piece of plastic, a paper cup that could get wedged unnoticed underneath a door and prevent it from closing properly in case of emergency.

Report to your supervisor or to Maintenance at once if you should notice that a fire door isn't in good operating condition.

REMEMBER Fire doors are valuable only if they can close in the event of fire. It's everyone's responsibility to make sure they can.



Does your job require lifelines and safety belts? If so, remember and follow these rules:

Never use a lifeline or safety harness/belt that is showing signs of deteriorating.

Choose attachments for lifelines carefully. Besides providing adequate strength, they should protect the lifeline from any chafing and abrasion caused by contact with sharp edges.

Always inspect lifeline and safety harness/belts carefully before use. You should look for torn fibers and worn hardware on harnesses/belts and on rope lines. On steel lines, check for rust and kinks as well.

Maintain your equipment. Brush off dust and dirt frequently to prevent fiber damage. Wash belts with warm, soapy water and rinse thoroughly. Steel wires must be kept dry and rust-free and should be lubricated frequently. Store lifelines carefully.

ARE YOU OVEREXPOSED?

Overexposure to hazardous materials through ingestion, inhalation or absorption through the skin can affect your health. It's important that you follow all safety precautions when working with or near hazardous materials.

How do you know if you are in the vicinity of hazardous materials?

Look for warning signs. Look for warnings that materials in your area may be toxic, corrosive, explosive, flammable, or reactive.

Read labels carefully. Get additional information by reading Material Safety Data Sheets.

Watch for signs of overexposure. Symptoms of overexposure to hazardous materials include dizziness; nausea; irritation of eyes, nose, and throat; skin rash; and feelings of nervousness, agitation, or sluggishness. If you feel any of these symptoms while working with or near hazardous materials, notify your supervisor immediately.



"I don't care if it is your birthday where's your hard hat?"

We welcome your comments and suggestions about the Connection. To submit articles and/or topic ideas, please call: (269) 629-9708 or send to P.O. Box 460, Richland, MI 49083. Also visit our website at: www.CLS-Skilledlabor.com