



The
UNIVERSITY
of **VERMONT**

Physical Plant Department
SAFETY SHORT • February 2017

WORKSAFE

Noise and Hearing Conservation

Noise induced hearing loss normally takes place gradually, with no warning symptoms and no external signs of damage, making it difficult for you to know that this is occurring. Noise induced hearing loss is usually caused by exposure to increased sound levels over a period of time.

This type of hearing loss is **preventable** and it is rarely too late to intervene. Although hearing protection will not bring back hearing, it will stop further damage from occurring.

Hearing loss will affect all areas of your life. It not only affects your work life by impairing your ability to detect or discriminate warning signals and by limiting your ability to hear clearly in meetings and other group settings, it also affects everyday interactions such as speaking and listening on the telephone or in places with higher background noises such as restaurants.

In you work in an excessively noisy environment, you should wear hearing protection. You should also wear them using power tools and lawn equipment, snow – blowers, etc. Hearing protectors issued by UVM include earmuffs and foam style earplugs. Both styles are effective in reducing noise levels if used correctly.

The Training and Compliance Office (TCO) will be conducting sound level surveys in high noise areas in the coming months to help determine the need for required hearing protection. In addition, audiometric testing of PPD employees working in high noise areas will be initiated through the TCO office. Upcoming trainings will include a TrainingToday computer based training session and a review of the UVM Hearing Protection Program during an upcoming zone/shop monthly meeting.

This Safety Short is to remind us all we have a role to play in keeping UVM safe!