



BEE SWIFT
FOCUSED ON SAFETY

Product Code

CM1311

Available in Sizes

ONE SIZE

Available in Colours

White
CM1311

DATASHEET

Click Medical Noise at Work Poster



- User friendly text and clear instructions show employees how to prevent accidents and injury whilst maintaining a healthy working environment
- Durable laminated construction with full colour illustrations
- Compiled by qualified health and safety practitioners
- Size 59 x 42cm (A2 Paper size)

Noise at Work
Over 1 million people in the UK work in noise levels which could put their hearing at risk.

1. The Law
In April 2005 "The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005" came into force, replacing the "Noise at Work Regulations 1989".
 • Employers must ensure that their employees hearing is protected from excessive noise in their work place.
 • 120,000 people in the UK suffer hearing loss due to noise conditions due to exposure to excessive noise at work.
 • Hearing protection and hearing aids must be made available.
 • Employees are responsible to a duty to wear hearing protection when it is provided.
 • Hearing protection and hearing aids must be provided when the average daily or weekly noise exposure exceeds 85 decibels.
 • No employee should be exposed to noise that exceeds 85 decibels after taking protection has been provided.

2. Noise Levels
The 2005 regulations require employers to take specific actions according to certain noise values.
 • These values relate to an average over a working day or week or to the maximum noise peak sound pressure to which employees are exposed in any given working day.
 • These values are as follows:
 1. Lower average exposure levels 85 decibels (dB), peak sound pressure 135 dB.
 2. Upper limit which must not be exceeded 87 dB (average) and 140 dB peak.
 3. Upper limit which must not be exceeded 87 dB (average) and 140 dB peak.
 4. These exposure values only after any hearing protection has been provided.
 Noise levels are measured in decibels (dB).
 Examples of noise levels: 100 dB (jackhammer), 90 dB (power drill), 85 dB (vacuum cleaner), 70 dB (office), 60 dB (library).

3. Health Effects
 • Exposure to noise at work can cause temporary or permanent hearing loss.
 • Permanent hearing loss usually occurs gradually due to prolonged exposure to noise.
 • It can also be caused suddenly from a sudden, extremely loud noise.
 • Sudden hearing loss can occur meaning that it may take several hours or days for hearing to return to normal.
 • Exposure to noise can also cause permanent tinnitus which causes ringing, whistling, buzzing or humming in the ears.

4. Symptoms
Symptoms and early signs of hearing loss include:
 1. Difficulty in hearing conversations.
 2. Not being able to hear the phone ring (Fig 1).
 3. Difficulty in hearing sounds (Fig 2) and a clearing, softening of other sounds.
 4. Ringing, whistling, buzzing or humming in the ears (Fig 3).
 "I keep hearing hummmmm!"
 "I can't hear the phone ringing!"

5. Assessing the Risks
The purpose of carrying out the noise risk assessment is to determine what actions, if any, need to be taken to ensure the health & safety of all employees exposed to noise.
 Generally a risk assessment should include:
 1. Is there a risk from noise and who may be affected by it?
 2. What may need to be done to comply with legal requirements?
 3. Identify any employees who may be at particular risk and who may need health surveillance.
 4. Collect data relating to your employees exposure times and relate them to the exposure action and limit values.
 Risk Assessment form shown.

6. Elimination or Control
If possible change the working practice to eliminate the noise risk, where this is not possible then hearing protection should be provided and the length of time employees are exposed to the noise limited.
 There are several ways to limit the noise levels at work:
 1. Design out noisy processes.
 2. Purchase machinery or tools with lower noise output.
 3. Maintain machinery.
 4. Add damping material to reduce vibration noise.
 5. Erect screens or enclosures (Fig 1).
 Fig 1: Worker using a power drill with a sound enclosure.

7. Hearing Protection
The most effective way to protect employee hearing is to reduce and control the noise generated at the source by machinery and by reducing the amount of time employees spend in noisy areas.
 Hearing Protection can also be provided through:
 1. Earplugs, which completely cover the ear (Fig 2).
 2. Earbuds, which are inserted in the ear canal (Fig 2).
 3. Ear muffs, which cover the entire ear by the ear canal.
 Fig 2: Worker wearing earplugs and earbuds.

8. Health Surveillance
Where noise risk has been identified above the upper exposure action limits, employees should have their hearing monitored in order to avoid long term deterioration. Long term hearing loss has to be treated by specialist health services who can provide the appropriate advice. Regular hearing tests by the first aid officer are essential.
 The surveillance will involve regular hearing tests, the hearing of musical notes, and when hearing is shown to have deteriorated referral to a doctor.
 The surveillance will typically identify early signs of hearing damage and ensure workplace control measures are effective.
 Fig 3: Hearing test being conducted by a first aid officer.

