C. NOISE TRAINING EXERCISES FOR USE IN THE HANDS-ON PORTION OF SKILLS TRAINING PROGRAMS

Exercise C-1: Identifying Noise Levels of Equipment (Group Activity)

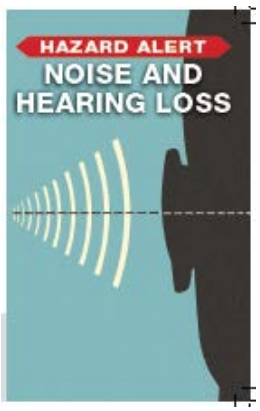
Learning objective: By the end of the exercise, participants should understand how to download and use the NIOSH Sound Level Meter App (or a comparable Android App – NIOSH recommends SoundMeter) to inform decisions about hearing protection and other noise-reducing efforts.

TEACHING MATERIALS:

- Sound Meter App (downloaded on to your phone in advance of the class)
  - iPhone – NIOSH SLM - https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/noise/app.html
  - Android – SoundMeter App - https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.gamebasic.decibel

Handouts:

- What and When of Hearing Protection (C-A)
- Hazard Alert Card (C-B) ***Note:*** *We have included the English 8.5 x 11 PDF version of this handout in this training program. Both the English and Spanish versions are available online at https://www.cpwr.com/publications/hazard-alert-cards. Contact CPWR in advance of any training at 301-495-8500 to order stock of the pocket size versions for free.*



INSTRUCTOR NOTE:

This activity is intended to be integrated into hands-on training. It should be conducted on a day when training will involve loud equipment and/or noise producing tasks. Alternatively, you can conduct a demonstration of how to measure noise levels using the app with available equipment on hand.

Before training begins:

1. Download the app you plan to use on your phone ahead of time and familiarize yourself with its features and how to read it.
2. Determine if the equipment you will be using will create noise levels above the NIOSH Recommended Exposure Level (85 decibels). If it will, make sure there is appropriate hearing protection for all participants in the training/demonstration.
3. Before training begins, you, or a worker willing to download one of the apps (preferably the NIOSH SLM app) on their phone, should download the app. If you are using a worker volunteer, explain that he/she will be assisting with a training activity.
4. Explain to the class that you will be measuring the noise level of the equipment/task you are about to use or demonstrate.
5. Prior to turning on the equipment/beginning a task, either you or your volunteer will take a reading of the environment as a baseline.
6. If needed, hand out appropriate hearing protection and make sure everyone present understands how to use it and inserts/puts it on before the equipment is turned on/the task begins.
7. Once the equipment is turned on/the task begins, you or the volunteer will take another reading.
8. Tell the rest of the class what the measurements were, and explain what this means regarding the need for hearing protection.
9. Repeat with any additional equipment being used.

At the end of the training distribute the handouts and explain that they contain information that the workers should refer back to periodically to make sure they are taking appropriate steps to protect their hearing.

INSTRUCTOR NOTE:

The NIOSH Sound Level Meter app has been validated through research as a way to easily use mobile phones on a jobsite to measure the surrounding noise level in order to determine whether hearing protection is needed, and if so how much.