



University of Colorado Environmental Health and Safety Guideline

NOISE EXPOSURE

Noise is often defined as annoying sounds; however, it is important to note that one person's sounds may be another person's noise. Not only can noise be annoying but it can also cause permanent damage to the ear, destroy hearing and create physical and psychological stress. Hearing loss is a natural part of aging; however exposure to excessive noise, typically above 85 decibels, can lead to Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL).

An office setting would not typically approach noise levels of 85 decibels however; equipment and various operations carried out on campus may reach levels which could potentially be harmful to hearing. Environmental Health and Safety has the capability to monitor sound levels in and around work areas to determine if sound control measures are necessary to limit noise exposure. If noise levels are monitored and determined to be above acceptable levels, a noise dosimeter is also available to determine employee total daily exposure. Daily exposure data can then be used to determine which, if any, controls are necessary to limit employee exposure.

If you believe you are exposed to excessive noise in the work place please contact EH&S to schedule a time to assess the situation by either calling 303-492-6025 or emailing ehs@colorado.edu.