

## Noise-induced Hearing Loss Conference, October 15, 2022

### Handle with Care: When is Loud Too Loud?

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#### # 2 Summary: Preventing Noise-induced Hearing Loss at Work

**Presenter:** Monique Hammond, Registered Pharmacist; Hearing & Safety Consultant

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NOTE: On-the job or Off-the- job: Noise damage to ears and hearing is the same.

#### Working in Industrial strength noise:

- Dangerous myths: My ears are used to or resistant to loud sound
- Workers question need for hearing protection & education
- Loud noise environments present Physical Injury Safety risks
- Hearing loss adds to Safety concerns: communication & hearing issues
- OSHA: Safety in workplace; private sector employees;
- Recommendations for employers regarding employees with Hearing Loss: ALL employees need protection; use visual alerts and info.
- General Industry Action Level (AL) noise limit: 85 decibels for 8 hours
- AL triggers *Hearing Conservation Program: Some points:*  
Employee information and education; free of charge hearing protectors & training for fit & correct use; free of charge hearing tests on entry & yearly;
- Overseen by Certified Occupational Hearing Conservation Specialist. Also involved with Hearing Conservation Program: audiologists and MDs
- Hearing aids can be used but are *not* protectors. Case by case determination. Wear under ear muffs?
- Tips if Hearing loss: Consult audiologist; work as team with specialists; quiet space for breaks & communication; correct & consistent use of hearing protection in loud places.

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- Basic hearing protection (PPE): Earmuffs and earplugs (passive protection). Not good choice if hearing loss
- OSHA: Better choices: Flat/uniform attenuation; Active (electronic) protection.
- Technology not a replacement for audiology and hearing care
- Ultimately: Are job and employer good fits for us?

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Monique Hammond is a registered pharmacist. She graduated with High Distinction from the University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy.

According to her doctors, a very loud sound exposure during a social event contributed greatly to the sudden, severe hearing loss that totally changed her life. Since that time, she has been on a mission to prevent noise-induced hearing loss. She tells her story and what she learned in her book: *What Did You Say? An Unexpected Journey into the World of Hearing Loss*.

Monique speaks regularly to groups and communities throughout the U.S.A. and Canada. So far, she has also worked with over 2500 employees from various industry sectors in Minnesota and in neighboring States on noise-related hearing, health and safety issues.

She is Past President of HLAA TC and served two terms on the MNCDHH – the Minnesota Commission for the Deaf, Deafblind and Hard-of-Hearing. She is currently the Vice President of Loop Minnesota.

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