# Hearing Safety

Instructor Guide

Safety Talk Overview

Safety Talks are a method to refresh an employee’s knowledge and skills, maintain their interest in safety and illustrate the organization’s commitment to creating a healthy & safe work environment. Safety Talks can be performed on a weekly basis or before the start of a new scope of work and should be about 15 minutes in duration. Generally, these Safety Talk meetings are led by a supervisor and should be mandatory for all crew members to attend. The content should be centred on a single topic (e.g. a safety rule, safe job procedures, recent incident, Joint Health & Safety Committee (JHSC) meeting minutes, inspection results, etc.).

go2HR developed these Safety Talks in conjunction with representatives from 11 ski areas in BC. The content is meant to be a base on which to work from, so please feel free to customize the subject matter to your own organization. If you would like to develop your own Safety Talk, please download the Safety Talk template from the go2HR website.

Topic Overview:

At ski areas in BC every year, a large number of employees are injured by exposure to excessive noise.

Demonstration and Discussion Topics

🞏 **Discuss** the hazards of exposure to excessive noise.

🞏 **Tour** the work area with workers pointing out where the accidents can occur.

🞏 **Distribute** the “Do’s & Don’ts” section of this handout.

🞏 **Use** the “Instructor Guide” section of the handout as your discussion guide and the “Safety Talk Record” to document the meeting.

🞏 **Discuss** how accidents can happen.

🞏 **Remind** employees that they are required to wear adequate personal protective equipment.

🞏 **Explain** what can be done to minimize the risk of accidents (do’s & don’ts in handout)

🞏 **Emphasize** that following safe work procedures is mandatory.

🞏 **Make it real** by telling at least two true stories of injuries from your experience.

🞏 **Discuss** the attitude of “it won’t happen to me”. Remind them that an injury can and will happen if they take shortcuts or are careless.

🞏 **Answer** any questions or concerns they might have.

🞏 **Set a good example** by working safely at all times.

# Hearing Safety



SAFETY TALK RECORD

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Discussion Leader: | | | Date: | | | | |
| Department: | | | Time: | | | | |
|  | | |  | | |  | |
| Attendees (Please print your name and sign beside it. If you are a contractor, also include your company name): | | | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| 🞏 | | 🞏 | | | | | |
| Near Miss/Incidents and Investigations Reviewed: (None this month 🞏) | | | | | | | |
| (Industry alerts can be discussed here as well) | | | | | | | |
| Safety Topic Discussed: | | | | | | | |
| Title: | | | | Date: | | | |
| Any questions or concerns from workers? | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | |
| Action Needed: | Person responsible: | | | | Due Date: | | Completed Date: |
|  |  | | | |  | |  |
|  |  | | | |  | |  |
| Reviewed By: |  | | | |  | |  |
| *Supervisor/Manager Print Name & Sign:* | | | | | *Date:* | | |

# Hearing Safety

Exposure to excessive noise, if not eliminated or controlled properly, can cause permanent hearing loss. Examples of occupations working with hazardous noise levels at ski areas include lift operators/maintenance, snow makers, truck drivers, mobile equipment operators, carpenters, maintenance personnel, and individuals working in a shop. Be aware that noise-induced hearing loss is 100% preventable. However, once hearing is lost, it is permanent and irreversible. Exposure to noise can have adverse effects such as reducing productivity; creating stress; interfering with communications; and making it difficult to hear equipment or warning signals.

Do’s:

* Use decibel meters to test questionable areas. **Rule of thumb:** if you have to shout to talk to people, the noise level is probably over 85 dBA and protection is needed.
* Select Hearing Protection Devices (HPD) based on noise exposure, communication demands, hearing ability, use of personal protective devices, temperature and climate, and physical characteristics of the job or worker.
* Ensure that foam earplugs are inserted properly by doing the following:

1. Use clean hands to roll and compress the entire earplug into a thin cylinder.
2. To make insertion easier, pull back and up on the outer part of the ear.
3. Insert the earplug into the ear canal, and hold it in place for a few seconds until it expands and blocks out noise.

* Schedule noisy machines when fewer employees are around.
* Apply vibration-absorbing materials onto walls.
* Understand what types of hearing protection are available:
  + Ear plugs – inserted to block the ear canal;
  + Semi-insert plugs – two ear plugs held over the ends of the ear canal by a rigid headband;
  + Ear muffs – sound diminishing cushions that fit around the ear and are held on with a head band.
* Understand when you should wear hearing protection:
  + When you have to shout to be heard;
  + When your ears are roaring or ringing at the end of the workday;
  + When speech or music sounds muffled after you leave work but clear in the morning.
* Participate in annual hearing tests (this is a WorkSafeBC requirement).

# Hearing Safety

Don’ts:

* Do not wait until you notice you are experiencing hearing loss to start protecting yourself from harmful noise.

