Noise-Induced Hearing Loss Stats and Facts

FACTS

1. A worker can have measurable occupational hearing loss, but not yet be deemed "hearing impaired" for regulatory purposes. In order to be recorded in OSHA's statistics, a person's hearing loss must be determined to be work-related and the hearing loss must be severe enough that the worker has become hearing impaired, NIOSH explains.
2. Workplace noise not only leads to hearing loss (including tinnitus), but also creates stress and anxiety, chronic fatigue, high blood pressure, cardiovascular and gastrointestinal problems in workers.
3. In the United States, hearing loss is the third-most common chronic physical condition among adults after hypertension and arthritis.
4. Hearing Loss hits the bottom line by sapping employee productivity, harming morale and boosting healthcare costs.
5. On a personal basis hearing loss can affect negatively on the ability of workers to qualify for jobs that require good hearing and communicate with co-workers.

STATS

Each year, 22 million workers are exposed to hazardous noise, according to the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), making hearing loss the third most common chronic physical condition among adults.

- About12% of the U.S. working population has hearing difficulty.
- About 24%of the hearing difficulty among U.S. workers is caused by occupational exposures.
- About 8% of the U.S. working population has tinnitus ('ringing in the ears') and 4% has both hearing difficulty

and tinnitus.

- Four million American workers who go to work each day are exposed to damaging noise levels. (NIOSH)
- In 2007, approximately 82 percent of occupational hearing loss cases were reported among workers in the manufacturing sector. (NIOSH)
- Noise-induced hearing loss is the number one occupational disease in North America. (Workplace Medical Corp.)
- Noise above 90 decibels (dBs) can cause hearing loss, especially when the exposure lasts for an extended period of time. (Bureau of Labor Statistics)