




Inside ASG

-  The Monthly Muster
-  The People Post
-  The Brag Board




The Monthly Muster

Occupational Noise Exposure

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that 22 million workers are exposed to potentially damaging noise at work each year. Whether you work at a sports venue, on a tarmac, or operate a jackhammer—hearing loss is preventable.

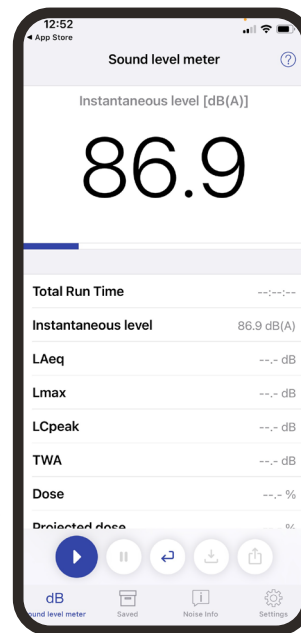
Know Your Workplace Noise Levels - If you need to raise your voice to speak to someone 3 feet away, noise levels might be over 85 decibels. Several sound-measuring instruments are available to measure the noise levels in a workspace.

These include sound level meters, noise dosimeters, and octave band analyzers. Noise may be a problem in your workplace if you:

-  Hear ringing or humming in your ears when you leave work.
-  Have to shout to be heard by a coworker an arm's length away.
-  Experience temporary hearing loss when leaving work.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) [Sound Level Meter App](#) is one tool available to the public to download on mobile iOS devices that measures sound levels in the workplace and provides noise exposure parameters to help reduce occupational noise-induced hearing loss.

Health Effects - Exposure to loud noise kills the nerve endings in our inner ear. More exposure will result in more dead nerve endings. The **result is permanent hearing loss** that cannot be corrected through surgery or with medicine. Noise-induced hearing loss limits your ability to hear high frequency sounds and understand speech, which seriously impairs your ability to communicate. Hearing aids may help, but they do not restore your hearing to normal.




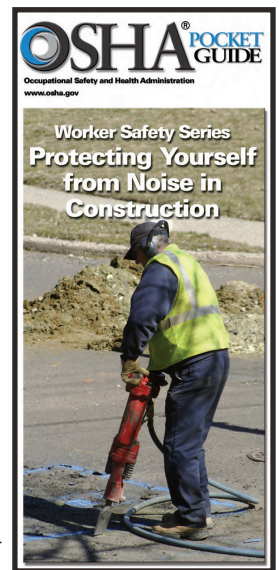
[Sound Level Meter App](#)



Exposure & Controls - **Ways** to control worker exposure to excessive noise and prevent hearing loss include using quieter machines, isolating the noise source, limiting worker exposure, or using effective **protective equipment**.

Standards - **OSHA requires** employers to implement a hearing conservation program when noise exposure is at or above 85 decibels averaged over 8 working hours, or an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA). Hearing conservation programs strive to prevent initial occupational hearing loss, preserve and protect remaining hearing, and equip workers with the knowledge and hearing protection devices necessary to safeguard themselves.

Hearing Loss in Construction - OSHA standards for **Construction** provides information related to noise construction regulations, national consensus standards and recommendations from other professional organizations, health effects and general resources. 



osha.gov





The People Post

Illinois Leave Benefits



New and Expanded Leave Benefits

Illinois law has long granted employees paid and/or unpaid time off for specific, limited use. Recent legislation expands the list of qualifying reasons for leave, including supplying certain eligible employees with paid leave for “any reason.”

Amendments to the Illinois Victims’ Economic Security and Safety Act - For the second consecutive year, legislators have amended the scope of leave reasons permitted under the Illinois Victims’ Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA). VESSA applies to all Illinois employers and gives eligible employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. This year’s amendments add three additional qualifying reasons for VESSA leave (collectively, “Violent Crime Bereavement”):

- to attend the funeral, an alternative to a funeral, or the wake of a “family or household member” (as defined in 820 ILCS 180/10(12)) killed in a crime of violence;
- to make arrangements for a family or household member killed in a crime of violence; and
- to grieve a family or household member killed in a crime of violence.

Unlike other VESSA-qualifying reasons for leave, however, leave used for Violent Crime Bereavement will be subject to additional restrictions and regulations.

New Child Bereavement Leave - Beginning in 2024, under the Child Extended Bereavement Leave Act (CEBL), employers with 50 or more full-time employees in Illinois must provide employees who experience the loss of a child by suicide or homicide with unpaid, job-protected leave. The CEBL broadly defines “child” to include a biological child, adopted child, foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis.

Expanded Donation Leave - The new year will bring a new title and new benefits under the Employee Blood Donation Leave Act, which currently requires employers with 51 or more employees (the law does not specify whether these employees must be in Illinois or may be elsewhere) to supply eligible employees with up to one hour of paid leave every 56 days to donate blood. Beginning January 1, 2024, the law will be known as the Employee Blood and Organ Donation Leave Act (“Donation Act”). In addition to benefits for donating blood, the Donation Act will give eligible employees up to 10 days of paid leave in any 12-month period to donate organs or tissue. Notably, employees are entitled to leave under the Donation Act only if they have been employed on a full-time basis for at least six months and have received approval from their employer to participate in blood, organ, or tissue donation.

Paid Leave for Any Reason - Finally, beginning in 2024, the Paid Leave for All Workers Act (PLAW) will provide eligible employees with up to 40 hours of paid leave per year to be used for any reason. As we previously reported, unless an exception applies, the PLAW broadly applies to all private employers and, in addition to affirmatively requiring employers to grant leave to employees, contains a robust list of additional employer obligations. Included among these responsibilities are recordkeeping and notice requirements and a prohibition on requiring employees to submit documentation or other proof to support a request for leave...it is vital that employers begin assessing and developing a PLAW-compliant leave program well in advance of the new year.

Full Article: [natlawreview.com](https://www.natlawreview.com)

The Brag Board

ASG Team Updates



==== This past month ASG had the opportunity to: =====

- Provide over 220 occupational health and safety inspections for our clients across the construction and manufacturing industries
- Provide American Red Cross Adult First-Aid/CPR/AED Training and Certification for new apprentices entering the construction trades
- Assist our clients with third-party compliance needs in Avetta and ISNetworld systems
- Provide Site Safety Representation for multiple utility projects in Southern Illinois



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