

# NIOSH Hearing Loss Prevention Program

## Our Research is Sound



*NIOSH Engineer conducting a noise level assessment of a fire engine in Pennsylvania.*

### Our Team

We are an interdisciplinary research team of audiologists, engineers and scientists at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) who actively work with partners to reduce occupational hearing loss—the most common work-related illness in the United States. NIOSH is the sole federal agency executing a planned program of research on occupational hearing loss. We offer state-of-the-art facilities and technologies to support noise and hearing research efforts. Our hearing protector laboratory is one of only five in the nation certified by the National Voluntary Laboratory Accreditation Program. We have clinical audiometric facilities, typical occupational hearing testing arrangements, an impulsive noise laboratory, and equipment for field studies. Through existing partnerships, we also have access to an anechoic chamber and animal testing and exposure facilities.

### Our Research

Our research interests span all areas related to occupational hearing loss, including identification of risk factors, characterization of exposures, understanding causative mechanisms, development of practical controls, advancing hearing protection technologies, innovation in education and outreach, evaluation of intervention effectiveness, and surveillance. Here are some current projects:

- Developing instrumentation to accurately characterize impulsive noise exposure
- Designing engineering controls for noise sources in the construction industry
- Improving hearing protection, testing methods, and rating schemes
- Establishing surveillance systems for occupational hearing loss

### Our Impact

Working with our partners has made a difference. For example, our partnerships with agricultural organizations have led to wide dissemination and adoption of hearing protection best practices among adult and young farmworkers. Partnerships with regulatory agencies resulted in development of revised regulations for rating hearing protector effectiveness. Through a partnership with a professional organization, we developed the Safe in Sound™ Award to recognize achievement in and share strategies to improve hearing loss prevention in industry. NIOSH and its partners also developed HPD Well-Fit™, which led to increased evaluations of Hearing Protection Devices (HPDs) in workplace settings.

### Partner With Us

To make a difference, become involved with NIOSH to prevent occupational hearing loss. Contact our program at 513-841-4221 or refer to [www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/noise](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/noise) for more information.



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