



# SAFETY ADVISOR

APRIL 2024

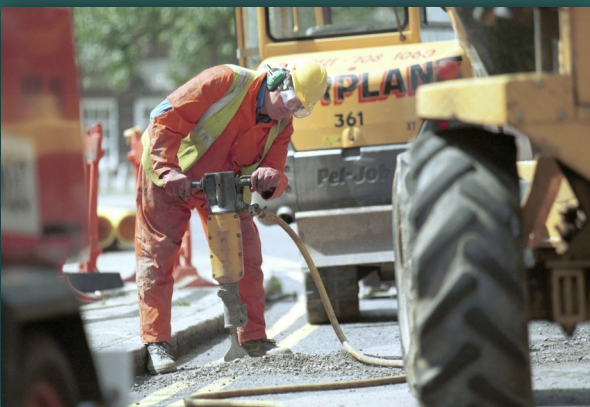
## What did you say ?

### Noise and Occupational Hearing Loss

By Keith Myhre

Central Office, FDOT Occupational Safety and Health Programs

Do you have difficulty listening to conversation when there are background noises? Do people sound like they are mumbling when they speak to you? Are you frequently asking others to repeat themselves when speaking to you? Whether the causes are occupation-related or not, it's important for people to understand how hearing loss can occur, its long term effects, and how it can be prevented. Hearing loss tends to go unnoticed, possibly for years as it can be a gradual condition worsening over time and often unnoticed by an individual until having audiometric testing. Continue reading for more information on the hazards and risks of noise, hearing loss and its prevention.



#### ***In This Issue:***

- *Occupational Hearing Loss*
- *Workplace Ergonomics*
- *Work Zone Safety Week*
- *Distracted Driver Awareness Month*
- *Safety & Wellness Recipe of the Month*
- *Did You Know: Hearing Protection*

# Noise and Occupational Hearing Loss

By Keith Myhre

Central Office, FDOT Occupational Safety and Health Programs

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), lists hearing loss as the third most common chronic physical health condition in the United States. About 22 million workers are exposed to hazardous noise on the job each year. And unfortunately, this condition doesn't heal or reverse its course. Eventually contributing to other risks long after the source of damaging noise has ended.

**What is noise anyway?** Noise is unwanted sound that is measured at 85 decibels (85 dB) or greater and averaged over an 8-hour workday. Causing fatigue, headaches, depression and irreversible hearing loss. Every individual has a specific sensitivity to noise. Exposure levels (dB) and exposure duration (time) are considered when recommending controls to reduce risk of injury. Noise is considered hazardous based on: it's volume, it's duration of exposure, and how often the exposure is repeated. For occupational studies, an 8-hour, time-weighted average is used, representing a full workday.

**Noise Sources:** We may think that jet engines, sirens, or chainsaws are the most detrimental noise sources to our hearing, but a continual high-pitched alarm, power tools, engines and even lawn equipment will register over 85 dB. If your daily schedule requires working in an environment of steady or frequent loud noise, there are controls that may be effective. Can the noise be eliminated? Can the loud work be substituted with tools that are not as loud? Can the duration or frequency working with or in the noisy location be adjusted? Finally, are you wearing hearing protection during your work in loud areas?

**Noise Help:** NIOSH has developed a Sound Level Meter App. This is a free download for your iPhone. You can take hearing protection into your own hands with the ability to measure harmful noise yourself!

*Information Source: National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health*



# Workplace Ergonomics

By Keith Myhre

Central Office, FDOT Occupational Safety and Health Programs

Last month we looked at the initial principles of moving heavy objects for minimizing injuries. We prepare. How heavy is the load? Is a hand truck needed? Where am I going with the load? Are there obstructions from point A to B? For example, how are you going to move your broken refrigerator out of the kitchen to make room for the new one? Once those critical points are addressed, then we look at ***the lifting***:

- Get close to the object.
- Keep elbows close to your torso.
- Keep your back straight and stomach muscles tight.
- Crouch down, bending at the knees, NOT hips.
- Look forward while lifting.
- Too heavy, get assistance



## ***The carrying:***

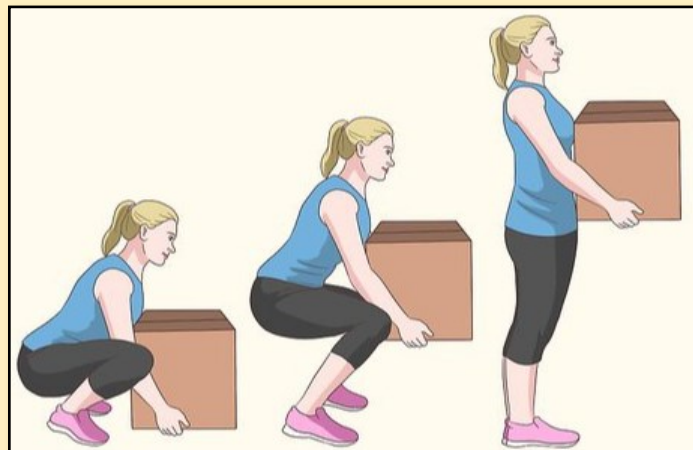
- Carry the object close to your body.
- Carry with shoulders, hips, knees, and feet facing forward.

## ***The set down:***

- Do not twist your body.
- Continue looking forward.
- Crouch at knees, NOT hips.
- Keep stomach muscles tight.
- Release your grip slowly.

Information courtesy of:

OSHA, Materials Handling e-tools







# STRESSED?



Take some “you time” on your next drive.

Self-care isn't always Netflix and fried food.

It can be switching on Do Not Disturb and setting that chill playlist to shuffle before you go, getting you to your destination distraction-free.

Safe driving is self-care.



Scan here for  
our playlists!



# ***DRIVE SAFE.***

***FLORIDA'S FUTURE DEPENDS ON IT.***

**WORK ZONE AHEAD**



**USE CAUTION. SLOW DOWN. STAY ALERT.**





# APRIL'S COOL RECIPE

RECIPES FOR THE ROAD — SPRING SERIES

## FLORIDA BLUEBERRY AND SPINACH SMOOTHIE

RECIPE CREATED BY:  
**CHEF JUSTIN TIMINERI**



### INGREDIENTS (SERVES 1)

- 1 cup Florida blueberries
- 1 cup Florida spinach, packed
- 2 tablespoons Florida peanuts, or 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon Florida honey, plus more to taste
- 1 cup low fat, plain Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon natural vanilla
- 2 cups ice
- 1 sprig of mint for garnish

### PREPARATION

Place all ingredients in a blender with a tight-fitting lid. Blend all ingredients until smooth. Taste smoothie and adjust sweetness with Florida honey, as needed. Garnish with fresh mint and blueberries.



Use the QR Code for more great **FRESH FROM FLORIDA** recipes. Enjoy this recipe? Post a photo of your creation and tag us **#LetsGetEveryoneHome**

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WHEN BUYING INGREDIENTS.

## ***Did You Know?***

*Our FDOT Safety and Loss Prevention Manual contains requirements for our occupational hearing conservation program. If you perform your work in an environment where noise generated from tools, machinery, vehicles or other items can be measured at an average of 85 decibels (85 dB) or higher, then you should be part of a department program where a noise survey is conducted for your work processes. If the survey indicates that your noise exposure exceeds allowable levels, then hearing protection training, personal protective equipment such as hearing protection and an audio monitoring program may be needed in your work place. If you have questions or concerns about noise levels, contact your District Safety Managers or Health and Safety Specialists.*



The Safety Advisor is distributed electronically to all FDOT staff monthly to promote indoor and outdoor workplace safety and generate an overall awareness of safety in our lives. It is produced monthly by the State Safety Office in Tallahassee, Florida.

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See Department safety information at: <https://www.fdot.gov/safety>

Anonymously report hazards in your workplace: (850) 414-5255

