

Many Workers Unaware of Job-Related Hearing Loss

Workplaces are often very chaotic places. Whether it is a construction site with different workers performing various tasks or a busy factory with machines running 24-hours a day, it can be difficult for workers to avoid being exposed to noise. For many, their entire workday is spent in noisy places, and they are unaware of the damage they are doing to their hearing.

Pennsylvania workers who have their hearing damaged because of their jobs may find themselves eligible for workers' compensation benefits. However, specific criteria must be satisfied before benefits will be awarded. Because hearing loss can be difficult to detect, most workers are unaware that they are having any problems.

A recent study by the University of Michigan examined hearing loss among a group of employers who work in auto manufacturing. The survey examined over 2700 workers. Prior to the survey, the workers were asked about their hearing. Over 75 percent replied that their hearing was good or excellent.

When these same workers then underwent tests to check their hearing, 42 percent of those workers had some sort of damage. These workers had used precautions to try to limit the damage while they were working, leading to questions about effectiveness and the problems that may have been caused by this prolonged exposure.

Workers who have suffered on the job injuries might be eligible for workers' compensation benefits to help them defray the costs of treatment. It is important to report injuries as soon as they occur to preserve any potential options that may be available. Failing to report any injuries

or illnesses may result in benefits being unavailable.

Source: University of Michigan ["My Hearing is Fine, Thank You, but Could You Please Speak Up?"](#) Heidi Watson, July 10, 2012.