

Workplace Health and Safety Queensland

Automotive service and repair industry – Noise and vibration

Noise and vibration are closely related but cause different health problems and injuries. Noise is very common to most work areas. Vibration generally tends to be related to hand/arm areas (e.g. using hand tools etc).

Look around the workplace to find things that vibrate or cause noise. Common noisy things include:

- electric and air tools
- hammering
- grinding
- welding
- cutting
- air compressors
- radios

To reduce noise problems:

- check noise levels of equipment with manufacturer/supplier prior to purchase of plant
- relocate the air compressor to outside the work area or use a sound enclosure/barrier (ensure there is still enough ventilation)
- repair (or fit) rubber mounts on fixed plant such as tyre removers, fans and ducting
- use bending and pressing techniques instead of hammering where possible
- set up different areas of work in the workplace by using separating walls or noise barriers to reduce the noise from one area affecting another area
- allocate a quiet area for food and rest breaks
- wear hearing protection such as ear muffs or ear plugs.

When hearing protection is used, workers must be trained in how to use and maintain the hearing protection. Consider monitoring workers' hearing by having an audiometric testing program done by a health professional. If a worker develops a hearing problem, detecting it early can help reduce the amount of hearing loss, and also help to identify the cause, so preventative measures can be put in place.

Where vibration from a hand tool is involved:

- use specifically designed non-vibrating or reduced vibrating tools
- adjust the speed of electric and air tools to decrease vibration
- keep tools well-maintained
- fit internal damping to tools, where possible.
- use external damping, where possible (rubber-coated handles or provide anti-vibration gloves).

Examples of noise levels of plant:

- air chisel – 87-92 dB
- six inch angle grinder - 105 dB
- air wrenches – 99-107 dB
- compressors – 85-88 dB

For further information on noise and vibration and other general health and safety issues call 1300 369 915 or visit

www.deir.qld.gov.au.

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