

Hearing protection

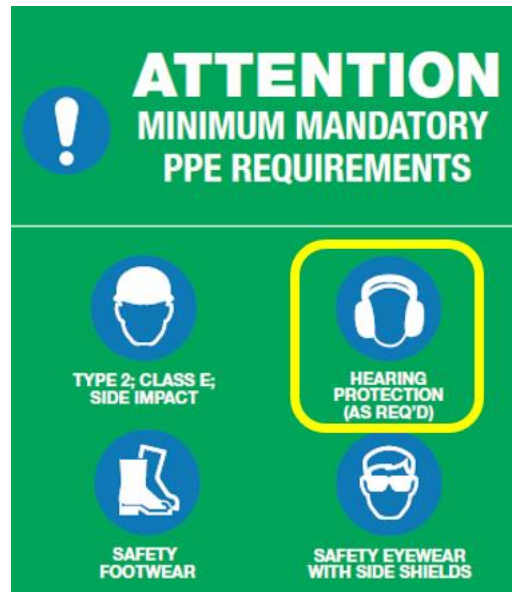
SWP-074

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To provide guidelines for the proper use and care of hearing protection equipment.

2.0 Description (See Appendix A – Hearing protection types)

- 2.1 Hearing protectors reduce the noise exposure level and the risk of noise-induced hearing loss.
- 2.2 Hearing protection is part of the minimum required PPE at Yukon Energy.



Typical Yukon Energy plant signage.

3.0 Guidelines

- 3.1 Hearing protection is required when the noise or sound level at the workplace exceeds 85 decibels (A-weighted) or dB(A).
- 3.2 Hearing protection must be in good condition and provide the required protection for the work undertaken.
- 3.3 Hearing protection must be of a design, construction and material type appropriate to the protection required.
- 3.4 Hearing protection requirements are outlined in CSA Z94.2; Hearing Protection Devices - Performance, Selection, Care and Use.
- 3.5 Wear hearing protection as directed by the manufacturer.
- 3.6 Hearing protection must be compatible with other required personal protective equipment, or communication devices.
- 3.7 Hearing protection should be appropriate for the temperature and humidity in the workplace.
- 3.8 Hearing protection must be able to provide adequate communication and audibility needs (e.g., the ability to hear alarms or warning sounds).

4.0 Hearing protection types (See Appendix A – Hearing Protection Types)

4.1 **Ear plugs** are inserted in the ear canal. They may be pre-molded (preformed), custom molded, or formable (foam ear plugs). Disposable, reusable or custom molded ear plugs are available.

Advantages

- Small and easily carried
- Convenient to use with other personal protection equipment (can be worn with ear muffs)
- More comfortable for long-term wear in hot, humid work areas
- Convenient for use in confined work areas
- Reusable

Disadvantages

- Requires more time to fit
- More difficult to insert and remove
- May irritate the ear canal
- Easily misplaced
- Must be properly fitted to provide adequate protection

4.2 **Semi-insert ear plugs** which consist of two ear plugs held over the ends of the ear canal by a rigid headband.

Advantages

- Small and easily carried
- Convenient to use with some other personal protection equipment
- More comfortable for long-term wear in hot, humid work areas

Disadvantages

- Cannot be worn with ear muffs
- May irritate the ear canal
- Must be properly fitted to provide adequate protection

4.3 **Ear muffs** consist of sound-attenuating material and soft ear cushions that fit around the ear and hard outer cups. They are held together by a head band.

Advantages

- Good low frequency protection
- Easy to wear
- Designed so that one size fits most head sizes
- Not easily misplaced or lost
- May be worn with ear plugs
- Replacement parts available

Disadvantages

- Less portable and heavier
- Less convenient for use with other personal protective equipment.
- Less comfortable in hot, humid work area
- Less convenient for use in confined work areas
- May interfere with the wearing of safety eyewear; wearing glasses results in breaking the seal between the ear muff and the skin and results in decreased hearing protection

5.0 Fit

- 5.1 Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- 5.2 Ensure the hearing protector tightly seals within the ear canal or against the side of the head.
- 5.3 Keep hair and clothing out of the way.

6.0 Care

- 6.1 Hearing protection equipment requires maintenance.
- 6.2 Clean your equipment daily. Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- 6.3 Inspect hearing protection for wear and tear; prior to use.
- 6.4 Store hearing protection in a safe, clean, dry place when not in use.
- 6.5 Dispose of and replace scratched, pitted, broken, bent or ill-fitting devices immediately. Damaged devices can interfere with vision and may not provide adequate protection.
- 6.6 Replace ear muff cushions or plugs that are no longer pliable.
- 6.7 Replace head bands when they do not keep ear cushions snugly against the head.
- 6.8 If replacement parts are required, only use identical parts from the original manufacturer to ensure the same safety rating.
- 6.9 Ear muffs:
 - Disassemble ear muffs to clean; use a mild liquid detergent in warm water; rinse with clean warm water.
 - Keep the sound-attenuating material inside the ear cushions dry.
 - Use a soft brush to remove skin oil and dirt that can harden ear cushions.
- 6.10 Do not change or modify the protective device.

7.0 Reference documents

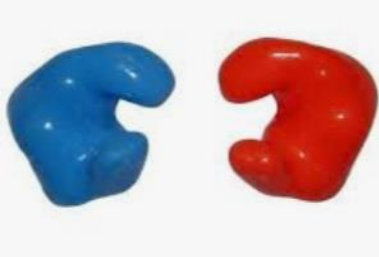
- Yukon OHS Regulations; Part 1 – General; 1.25, Protective Equipment and Clothing – Hearing.
- Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (CCOHS); Hearing Protectors.
- Government of Yukon - Health & Safety; Personal Protective Equipment - Hearing Protection.
- WorkSafe BC; Hearing protection is a sound idea, When you use foam ear plugs...

Appendix A – Hearing protection types

Earplugs



Pre-molded

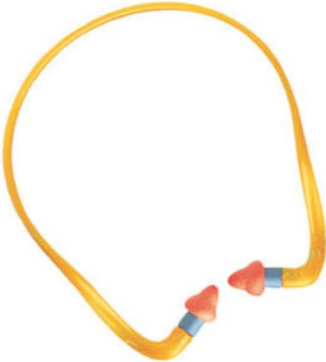


Custom molded



Formable

Semi-insert ear plugs



Ear muffs



Over-the-head



Attached to safety headwear