



*We're about service, commitment, results, and accountability!*

*Our Weekly Safety Tip provides valuable and current safety information relevant for Work, Home & Play.*

*And, you will be kept current on the latest Safety Compliance issues.*



**SCI SAFETY NEWS OR TIP**



**SCI OSHA NEWS OR COMPLIANCE**



**SCI HEALTHYLIVING and WELLNESS NEWS**

**We want to hear from you! Send us your feedback and give us ideas for future safety topics.**

**Let us know how you feel about our new look!**

**Safety Slogan**

**Safety is the biggest investment.**

**James Lehrke-SCI**

**of the week**

## SCI Safety Tip: Now Hear This! Preserve Employee Hearing and Save \$\$\$

Sources: <http://www.blr.com>

Date: August 2, 2012

*Costs of hearing loss compensation can add up very quickly. This is especially troubling, given that noise-induced hearing loss is most common occupational injury in the United States.*

Compensation for hearing loss have been known to cost over \$38,000 for loss of hearing in one ear and over \$80,000 for hearing loss in both ears. To avoid employee hearing loss and the inevitable costs, Theresa Y. Schulz, PhD, suggests looking at indicators for hearing loss. For example:

- **Standard Threshold Shift (STS):** A 10 decibel (dB) average change in hearing at 2, 3, 4 kHz as compared to baseline (lagging indicator)
- **Temporary Threshold Shift (TTS):** An STS that recovers when the audiogram is repeated when employee is noise free for 14 hours (leading indicator)
- **OSHA Recordable Hearing Loss:** STS that results in mild hearing impairment (thresholds at 2, 3, 4 kHz or 25 dB) (very lagging indicator)
- **Dosimetry:** Noise exposure measure around the employees hearing area (around the ear) (leading estimate of exposure)
- **In Ear Dosimetry:** Protected noise exposure measured inside the hearing protector (leading measure of true exposure)
- **Personal Attenuation Rating (PAR):** Personal level of protection provided by a given earplug (leading indicator of protection provided by earplug)
- **Hearing Loss Compensation:** Damages paid to employee for noise induced hearing loss (very lagging indicator)

### Audiometric Exams

Audiograms are another way to prevent employee hearing loss. OSHA regulations require that employees whose noise exposures exceed an average of 85 dB over 8 hours must participate in a hearing conservation program. As a participant in this program employees must receive a baseline and annual audiogram.

Audiometric exams accurately measure hearing ability in each ear and detect the threshold for hearing different frequencies of sound—typically 500; 1,000; 2,000; 3,000; 4,000; and 6,000 Hz.

The measured hearing thresholds are compared with previous audiograms to determine if a threshold shift, or a loss of hearing, has occurred.

- An employee will be considered to have a hearing loss if he or she experiences an STS during an annual audiogram. STS or hearing loss may be slight, moderate, or severe.
- An employee will be found to have an STS if his or her threshold for hearing has increased an average of 10 dB or more at 2,000; 3,000; and 4,000 Hz in either ear from the baseline audiogram.

Based on the results of an audiometric exam, you may need to change the type of hearing protection an employee wears to provide more protection. And since hearing loss may also be attributed to other medical conditions (such as the use of medication or a recent injury), a further medical evaluation may be required.

## SCI OSHA News: OSHA Inspections Good for Workers and Companies, New Study Says

Source: <http://www.blr.com>

Date: July 30, 2012

*A new study indicates that workplace inspections save lives, reduce workers' compensation claims, and do not cost jobs.*

Research published in *Science* magazine in May sheds light on a hot-button political issue: the role and effectiveness of government regulation. In this study, the issue was the impact of government safety inspections.

The study, entitled "Randomized Government Safety Inspections Reduce Worker Injuries with No Detectable Job Loss," was co-authored by Harvard Business School Professor Michael Toffel, Professor David Levine of the Haas School of Business at the University of California, Berkeley, and doctoral student Matthew Johnson. The study examines workplace inspections conducted by California's Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA).

The authors carried out the first evaluation of a "clinical trial" of the state's mandated randomized inspections to determine their effect on both worker safety and to companies' bottom lines.

"The randomized inspections provided the perfect natural experiment that uses the power of randomization just like a medical clinical trial," Toffel says. "Because Cal/OSHA typically inspects facilities following complaints or recent accidents, you can't study those inspections to get an unbiased understanding of whether they make a difference. By studying the inspections Cal/OSHA conducted at workplaces selected at random, we were able to overcome this problem to learn the actual impact of inspections."

### Inspections Not Detrimental to Employers

The study found that within high-hazard industries in California, inspected workplaces reduced their injury claims by 9.4 percent and saved 26 percent on workers' compensation costs in the 4 years following the inspection, compared to a similar set of uninspected workplaces.

On average, inspected firms saved an estimated \$355,000 in injury claims and compensation for paid lost work over that period. What's more, there was no discernible impact on the companies' profits.

"We spent several years collecting data, not just on injuries, which is very important, but also on other indicators to see whether inspections led to problems they are often accused of causing, like whether they increased costs and led to the elimination of jobs. We looked at company survival, employment, sales, and total payroll to see if inspections were detrimental to the employers," says Professor Levine.

"Across the numerous outcomes we looked at, we never saw any evidence of inspections causing harm," Toffel explained. "If OSHA inspections conducted in all 50 states are as valuable as the ones we studied, inspections improve safety worth roughly \$6 billion to employers and employees, ignoring pain and suffering. The overall message of our research is that these inspections worked pretty much the way one would hope. They improved safety, and they didn't cost firms enough that we could detect it."

The study appears to overturn conventional wisdom that workplace inspections result in elimination of jobs and harm to employers, while doing little to improve overall worker safety. The researchers said they found no evidence to support these frequently cited reasons for limiting or eliminating government inspections of private industry workplaces.

**OSHA Chimes In**

"OSHA doesn't kill jobs, says OSHA administrator Dr. David Michaels, "it helps prevent jobs from killing workers.... The fact is OSHA inspections save lives and jobs at the same time. This is not a surprise to me. I regularly hear from employers, both large and small, that they value OSHA inspections and treat the inspector as an additional, expert set of eyes."

**HEALTHY BITES**

Quick Tips for Healthy Living

PREVEA  
Health & Wellness

**Nutrition and Weight Loss Part 3**

- Without fat or fiber to slow them down, refined carbohydrates fuel the appetite. Keep hunger in check by sticking with whole grains.
  - Eating a bagel with fat-free cream cheese for breakfast? It's about as good for your waistline as a doughnut. Both of these foods fuel the appetite like gasoline feeds a fire. Downing refined carbohydrates is like mainlining sugar — you get a blood-sugar spike and then a precipitous drop, which leads to rebound hunger. The result? You reach for another sugary goodie to stave off fatigue, irritability and gnawing hunger pangs. Keep your cravings in check by cutting out high-sugar snacks and refined carbohydrates, like white rice, sorbet, cookies and crackers. Or, eat small amounts, like half of a bagel or one cup of pasta, with high-quality protein or fiber to slow it down in your system.
- Your weight-loss formula: Cut 250 calories a day to lose half a pound a week. Walk two miles to burn 150; nix the rest by cutting cola.
  - Take the guesswork out of weight loss by turning your diet into a fail-proof formula. It takes a 3,500-calorie deficit to drop a pound of body fat. That means you'll need to cut out 250 calories a day to lose half a pound per week. A two-mile walk will easily burn 150 calories, leaving you with just 100 more calories to subtract from your diet. You can do that by forgoing a can of soda or skipping your afternoon cookies. If your goal is to lose a pound each week, you'll have to create a 500-calorie deficit each day. To do so, taper off your calories gradually; this will give your appetite time to adjust, making you less prone to failure
- Don't be fooled by food labels. According to Marion Nestle, PhD, author of Food Politics, we interpret all health claims to mean low-cal.
  - You can't judge a food by its packaging. Just because it's organic, high-protein or low-fat doesn't mean it's a diet-friendly option. When foods carry claims like "made with whole grains" or "low in sugar," we think we're buying health food — even though that isn't necessarily the case. And when we think we're being healthy, we reward ourselves by eating up to 44 percent more. Part of that reason is because we underestimate the amount of calories in so-called health food. Disregard the alluring food labels on the front of packaging and check the nutrition information for yourself. Take a close look at the serving size and calculate how much you would realistically consume in one sitting before digging in.



*What do you think?*

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*In Loving  
Memory of Jessica Lefrke*