

# Injury Fact Sheet-Construction



## Wood Frame Building Construction – Noise Injuries

418 carpenters developed hearing loss from exposure to excessive noise in the years 2000-2004.

\*Exposure to excessive noise is called a “struck by” injury because noise “strikes” the eardrum

Hearing loss is usually classified as a “permanent partial disability” and are expensive claims which effect your industrial insurance premiums. They contribute to the reason for the base rate of \$2.80 per hour per employee paid by wood frame building contractors in 2006. If your company has a higher than average number of injuries (claims), your “experience rating” could increase by as much as 25% in one year to \$3.47 per hour per employee.

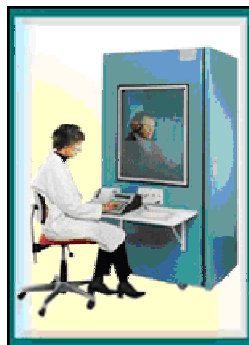
Stated in another way, if you had 5 full-time carpenters and had an average number of injuries (claims), you would pay about \$28,000 in premiums in 2006. If your experience rating increased by 25% because you had higher than average injuries, you would pay about \$6700 more or \$34,700 in premiums in 2006.

### Causes of noise injuries

Almost all hearing loss is caused by unprotected exposure to excessive noise. Excessive low and medium level noise experienced by the unprotected ear leads to a gradual hearing loss over time. Very loud sounds, even of short duration, can produce immediate, permanent hearing loss.

### Ways to prevent noise injuries

- ◆ Use hearing protection that is suitable for your noise exposure and is comfortable. Earplugs provide the greatest amount of protection. Muffs are sometimes more convenient, and may be easier to use for occasional noise exposure. Don't take your hearing protection off in the noisy area, go to a quiet area to have a conversation.
- ◆ Buy tools and accessories that are quieter than average. Many manufacturers are introducing products that are less noisy.
- ◆ Get annual hearing tests to identify hearing loss before it becomes noticeable. If protection is taken, a temporary, small hearing loss won't become a major permanent loss.



The average 25-year old carpenter has the ears of a 50-year old person who has not been exposed to noise.

