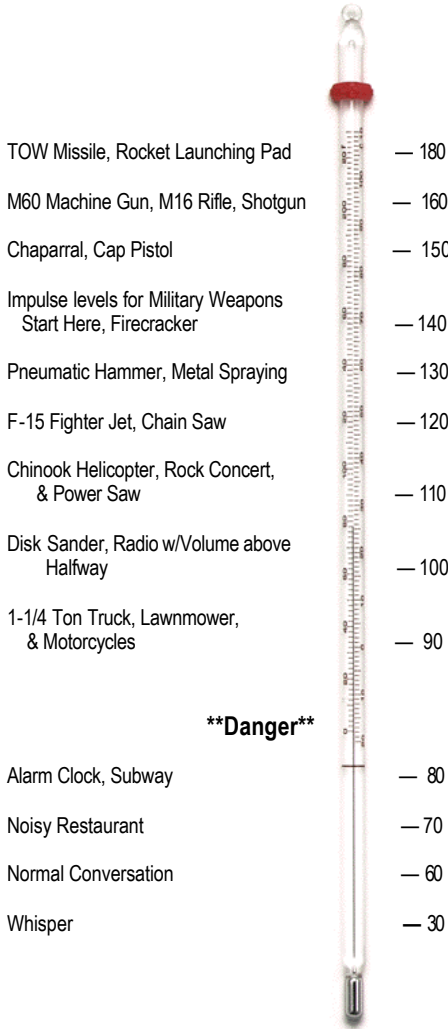




## Just the Facts...

## Noise and Hearing Loss



### WHAT is it?

- Hearing loss caused by loud noise is the most common injury in the Army.
- Noise is the most common hazard soldiers and civilians may face in the workplace and during training.
- The most dangerous occupational and recreational noise is from firing weapons.
- A noise-caused hearing loss is most often characterized by hearing, but not understanding. The first clue of a noise-induced hearing loss may be turning up the TV or asking family members to repeat what was said.

### WHEN can it damage your hearing?

- At work, at home and at play.
- Anytime there is noise and you have to raise your voice to be heard at 3 feet.
- At 85 decibels (dB) for continuous (steady) noise and 140 dB for impulse (banging) noise.

### WHY protect your hearing?

- Hearing loss caused by loud noise can become permanent and is not medically treatable.
- Loud noise can cause ringing in your ears, increased stress and fatigue.
- Impaired hearing can cause serious or fatal mistakes in combat.

### HOW can you protect your hearing?

- Use properly fitted and maintained hearing protection.
- Cotton or tissues are not hearing protectors!
- Ask for equipment with low noise levels.

### WHO can help?

- You, by wearing hearing protection.
- In the Army, the installation Hearing Conservation Officer (HCO) can provide assistance for soldiers and civilian workers. The HCO may be an audiologist, occupational health nurse, physician, preventive medicine officer, industrial hygienist or safety personnel. To find out who your HCO is contact the Preventive Medicine Office at your installation.
- In the private sector, an audiologist, occupational health nurse or physician should be able to provide additional information.
- The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Helpline at 1-800-638-8255 or (301) 897-0153 can also provide information.

### REMEMBER the four "P"s:

Hearing loss from noise is

**PAINLESS,**  
**PROGRESSIVE,**  
**PERMANENT and**  
**PREVENTABLE!**