

## How loud is it? — Forestry

As a worker in the forest industry, you may be exposed to hazardous levels of noise on the job. Regular exposure to sounds louder than **85 decibels (dBA)** can cause permanent hearing loss. You may not work regular eight-hour shifts or be exposed to noise continuously, but you may still be at risk of hearing loss. Noise levels and exposure time work together to create the risk. Working in higher noise levels for a short time or in lower noise levels for a long time can cause the same harm.

The table at right shows how long you can be exposed to certain noise levels without harm. It also lists examples of typical noise exposures for several forestry occupations.

For example, if you work as a manual faller for 8 hours a day and are exposed to noise at 103 dBA, you can work in this environment for up to 7.5 minutes before the noise becomes hazardous. It's important to know how loud your equipment or work environment is to understand the risk you face.

If testing shows that your noise exposure is greater than 85 dBA (averaged over an eight-hour day), your employer must take steps to protect your hearing. These steps include reducing workplace noise and providing you with hearing protection. Your hearing protection must be comfortable and provide adequate protection from noise.

The Canadian Standards Association (CSA) rates hearing protection as Class A, B, or C, depending on how much noise reduction the protection provides. The recommended protection for eight hours of exposure is as follows:

Exposure: L <sub>ex,8</sub> (dBA)	Recommended class
< 90	C
> 90 up to and including 95	B
> 95 up to and including 105	A
> 105	Dual*

\* Dual hearing protection shall be used. A minimum of a Class B earmuff and a Class A earplug is required.



Maximum exposure time by noise level (regardless of occupation)	Examples of forestry occupations*	
16 hours	82 dBA	Chokerman
12 hours	83 dBA	
8 hours	85 dBA	Log truck driver
4 hours	88 dBA	Boom boat or loader operator; log sorter
2 hours	91 dBA	Yarder operator
1 hour	94 dBA	Feller buncher operator
30 min	97 dBA	Dozer or skidder operator
15 min	100 dBA	
7.5 min	103 dBA	Manual faller
3 min, 45 sec	106 dBA	
1 min, 50 sec	109 dBA	Landingman
1 min	112 dBA	
30 sec	115 dBA	

\* Based on historical WorkSafeBC data; may not reflect all operating conditions and new equipment

### For more information

[Hear for Good: Preventing Noise Exposure at Work](#)