



# New Mexico Commission for Deaf & Hard of Hearing

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Website: [www.cdhh.nm.gov](http://www.cdhh.nm.gov)

## Hearing Protection

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### For more information contact:

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505.383.6530 Voice/TTY

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### Loud Noise is Dangerous to Your Hearing

Loud, high-decibel noise is everywhere. Jackhammers, rock concerts, jet engines, leaf blowers, and frequently using headphones at high volumes, can all have an effect on your hearing. These days, employers are often conscientious regarding loud noises at work and provide hearing protection. However, listening to media with headphones can produce sound levels in excess of 105-120 decibels. Sounds at or above 85 decibels may cause permanent hearing loss with prolonged exposure.

### Aside from loud music, “too loud” noise can be found many places:

- Electric Drill: 95 decibels
- Ambulance Siren: 120 decibels
- Stock Car Races: 130 decibels
- Busy Game Arcades: 110 decibels
- Noisy Children’s Toys: up to 135 decibels

See the Center for Hearing and Communication website at [noiseawareness.org/info-center/common-noise-levels](http://noiseawareness.org/info-center/common-noise-levels) for a larger list of noise levels.

There are ways to protect against hearing loss. The following prevention tips are for individuals of all ages to keep in mind:

1. Get periodic hearing tests from an Ear, Nose, and Throat specialist, a licensed audiologist, or licensed hearing aid dispenser.
2. Limit the volume of your media player. If you cannot hear other people talking from three feet away when you are wearing headphones, the volume is too loud and could be damaging to your hearing.
3. Check your medications for side effects. Some medications can cause temporary or permanent hearing loss. Over-the-counter and prescription medications known to be ototoxic include antibiotics, chemotherapy drugs and anti-inflammatory drugs. Discuss your medications with your doctor or pharmacist.
4. Limit exposure to music concerts, sporting events, or loud equipment like lawn mowers or leaf blowers that may be damaging to your hearing. Use ear plugs whenever possible.
5. Carry ear plugs in your purse, car, or briefcase; you never know when you will find yourself in noise pollution. Cheap disposable ear plugs can be purchased from many major retail stores. Some companies now make custom fitted ear molds for people who are frequently exposed to loud noise.