



Hearing Prevention: Understanding Your Hearing Threshold

Noise prevention and protection are two very important elements of a workplace hearing conservation program. But regardless of a company’s processes, employees can take personal inventory of their own hearing. Understanding hearing thresholds and shifts can help employees take important preventative steps to safeguard their hearing.

The chart below shows a range of hearing loss and the decibel level for each. Employees who have audiometric testing can make a quick comparison to this graph to determine the severity of any hearing loss they may have.

Normal Hearing	Mild Hearing Loss	Moderate Hearing Loss	Moderate/Severe Hearing Loss	Severe Hearing Loss	Profound Hearing Loss
-10 to 25 decibels	26 to 40 decibels	41 to 55 decibels	56 to 70 decibels	71 to 90 decibels	91 to 100 decibels
<i>Quietest sounds you can hear:</i> Breathing, whispered voice	<i>Quietest sounds you can hear:</i> Quiet rural area, rustling leaves	<i>Quietest sounds you can hear:</i> Library sounds, bird calls	<i>Quietest sounds you can hear:</i> Restaurant conversation	<i>Quietest sounds you can hear:</i> Television, vacuum cleaner	<i>Quietest sounds you can hear:</i> Lawn mower, city traffic

Source: Iowa Health – Des Moines Mobile Audiology, 515-263-5143.