HSE ALERT # 157

NOISE POLLUTION

Pollution is the introduction of contamination to the environment, which causes instability, disorder, harm or discomfort to physical system into human beings. Pollution can be in the form of chemical, energy such as noise, heat or light energy.

When the sound hits ears and disturbs the environment, **noise pollution** is created. Noise pollution comes from loud voices of some animals, loud music, vehicles, aircraft and rail transport, air-conditioners, factories, amplified music and construction work etc.

Measures of noise:

Noise is measured in decibels, when noise is at 85 decibels; no human being can sleep, and requires mandatory PPE at work. At 120 decibels, pain in ear occurs and hearing begins to be damaged.

Effects of noise pollution:

Human health:

Noise pollution disturbs human health and behavior in a number of ways including deafness, lack of sleep, irritability, indigestion, heartburn, high blood pressure, ulcers and heart disease.

Sleep interference:

Very high levels of noise can wake people from their sleep with a jerk and keep them awakened or disturb their sleep pattern. This could make them tired the next day.

Decreased work performance:

Increased noise levels give rise to a lack of concentration and lack of accuracy at work, and reduce one's productivity and performance. Difficult tasks can be impaired, and instructions or warnings difficult to be heard and interpreted, causing accidents.

How to avoid sources of noise pollution

Traffic:

Try not to live or work near major intersection or roads, shopping centers and sporting facilities.

Limit the noise:

The following are ways that one can limit environmental noise and blunt the effects of noise pollution.

- To reduce noise pollution one can install Double-Panned Windows in home and at workplace.
- At home turn off the T.V because a constant backdrop of television can have an effect on you as a distraction and potential stressor.
- Be a good neighbor by not annoying those who live next door with your music.