

LOFTON LAGNIAPPE

MONTHLY EMPLOYEE NEWS



Hearing Safety in the Workplace

By: Steve Ham, Lofton Safety Services

May is Better Hearing Month. The best protection to help you with potential hearing loss in the workplace is to eliminate the hazard. So how loud does the noise need to be to damage a person's hearing? Hearing loss can occur when exposed to 85 decibels of noise over 8 hours. Normal conversations typically occur at 60 decibels, well below the hearing-loss threshold. For every 3 decibel increase over 85 decibels, hearing loss can occur in half the amount of time. The louder the noise, the faster hearing loss occurs.

Where do workplace noises fit into this picture?

- Air compressors from 3 feet away register 92 decibels, which would take less than 2 hours to cause hearing loss.
- Powered drills register 98 decibels, which would cause damage after 30 minutes.
- Typical factories often register at 100 decibels – that's 15 minutes of exposure.
- Powered saws can reach 110 decibels from 3 feet away, which could cause permanent hearing loss in under 2 minutes.

Front line defense against workplace hearing loss begins with proper PPE that meets OSHA hearing protection requirements. Ear plugs provide the greatest amount of protection as long as they are inserted in the ear canal correctly. Ear muffs can also reduce the decibel exposures, though not to the extent that ear plugs can.

WORKPLACE HEARING SAFETY UNDERSTANDING DECIBEL LEVELS



Some common indications that the noise levels in the workplace may be too loud include:

- If they complain about the loudness of the noise.
- If they complain of headaches or ear aches over a shift.
- If they complain the noise level makes normal conversation difficult.

With the proper hearing protection controls in place, employers and employees can reduce and protect against potentially damaging hearing loss.



Officer Kudos

BIG shout-out to Officer **Vaughn Edwards** and Officer **Harvey Benton** in Little Rock who went above and beyond for a co-worker.

Their co-worker's family home had sustained heavy damage from a falling tree. The tree left a considerable hole in a section of roof and needed significant repair. The home belonged to the co-worker's mother who was financially unable to have it repaired. Officers Edwards and Benton utilized their time and expertise (Edwards at one time was a roofer) and rallied to repair the damage and other issues found during the work. Donations made by other Lofton employees



helped cover the cost of materials. Thank you, Officers Edwards and Benton, for exemplifying the type of character we should all strive for on a daily basis.

MAY 2021

MAY 5

Cinco de Mayo

MAY 6

National Nurses Day



MAY 9

Mother's Day



MAY 15

Armed Forces Day

MAY 31

Memorial Day



MEMORIAL DAY

Lofton offices will be
CLOSED Monday, 31st





“Living in an Uncertain World”

By: Glenda Lofton, Ph.D.

In 1969, when Bret and Bart were small, after many months of looking, Tommy purchased our first boat--a used, 15-foot pleasure boat with a deep V and a 100-horsepower engine. It was the beginning of many adventures and a few "mis"adventures--primarily on our annual, week-long trip to Bridgeside Motel and Marina at Grand Isle. Typically Tommy and I were so intent on making the most of our vacation that the week was half over before we began to relax and really enjoy ourselves. On one trip (during the first half of the week), Tommy, Bret, Bart, and I were hurrying through the pass that separates Grand Isle from Elmer's Island to go speck fishing. The channel that flows between the islands is deep but not always clearly marked, and there are a number of sandbars that border it. We were all trying to watch for the sandbars when, you guessed it, we stuck on one. Tommy was exasperated! We had been stuck on sandbars before, and he was the one who had to jump into the water and push us off. Without saying a word, he jumped defiantly over the side of the boat and into the water. But this time he didn't land on the sandbar as he usually did. Part of the boat was on the sandbar, but part was over the channel. As we looked over the side of the boat, all that we could see was his cap floating on the top of the water. When he finally came up, all he could see were three wide-eyed faces staring anxiously over the side of the boat. With a great sense of relief, we all burst out laughing.

Thirty-seven years later, a group of us--this time family and friends--once more set out for a

week at Grand Isle. The guys were going by boat from Pecan Island where Bret had a camp, and the girls by automobile. This time the guys were in a bigger boat, complete with a GPS and a depth finder, and the channel in which the boat was traveling was marked by red and green buoys to show the way. But...you guessed it! Once again the boat got stuck on a sandbar near Morgan City. This time, however, the boat was too big for four men and even a shrimp boat to



How do you cope with the sandbars in your life?

push it off. The sandbar was too big and the water too low for even a tugboat who came along to wash the sand away. Kind ship captains and shipyard managers offered advice by radio and cell phone and sought ways to help, but soon it was dark and the boat remained on the sandbar overnight.

About 8:30 the next morning I called Tommy on his cell phone. "We're off!!!" he announced jubilantly. "What happened?" I asked. "Who got you off?" "God did," he said. "God did?" I asked. "Yes," he said. "A small local thunderstorm came up--the kind we always hate when we're out in the boat. It lasted only about 30 minutes, but the waves kept getting higher and higher. The boat began to bump up and down on the waves, and I started the engines and

slowly backed off." "What time did you get off?" I asked again. "About 7:45," he noted. As Tommy told the story, I got "goosebumps." You see, unable to sleep, I had gotten up at 7:15, knelt by my bed, and said, "God, there are big problems in the world. There's a war between Israel and Lebanon. The terrorists are trying to blow up airplanes. People are still hurting from hurricanes here at Grand Isle and other places. This is not that important, but if you could help Tommy get off that sandbar, I would be so grateful." "At about 7:15," Tommy said, "a storm came, and within 30 minutes the boat was off the sandbar."

How do you cope with the sandbars in your life? Do you dive in even when you're in over your head? Do you take time out to see the humor in the situation or the opportunities for learning? Do you use the resources that are available to you--the wisdom and knowledge of others, guidebooks, technology, the people who care and want to help? Do you pray? What gives you the hope and strength to persevere? These questions seem particularly relevant as we deal with the COVID virus, the recent tragic sinking of the ship off Grand Isle, and other world events. When this happened back in 2006, Billy Graham had published a new book titled, *The Journey: How to Live by Faith in an Uncertain World*. In the book he reminds us that the Bible says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7). When we pray, we are making a "declaration of dependence" on God, knowing that God loves us and is concerned about every detail of our lives (even the sandbars).

Reducing Stress

From: Mary Dixon, Benefits Coordinator

This year has been novel and challenging. And although the stress we've experienced is new, the tools we have at our disposal to process it are the same ones we've always had. By tailoring them to meet our current needs, these tools can be used to keep us healthy, productive, happy and optimistic until this very stressful episode in our lives nears a conclusion. Here are three ways to reduce stress:

NAME IT. We can't remove COVID from our lives, but we can name it as a source of the stress in our lives. That's an important step. We can also take several measures to resolve its influence and protect ourselves from the negative consequences of the pandemic.



MINDFULNESS. Mindfulness means slowing down and learning to live in and savor the present moment. Many well-known practices, when combined with exercise, are superb for stress reduction. Things like yoga, tai chi, and mindful walking are perfect. Meditation works, too, and it's easy!

SUPPORT. If you or anyone in your family is struggling with the cumulative stress of the pandemic, we recommend finding a mental health professional to help you find your way to the other side. If you don't want to go to a mental health professional, a wise, trusted friend can help, too! The point is to talk to someone freely and openly about your life. Once you start talking, the floodgates may open, and you may learn you had far more to get off your chest than you realized.