Choosing and Using Hearing Protection

Hearing protection comes in three styles

**Earplugs**
- fit inside the ear canal
- cut noise by as much as 25 decibels
- may be disposable or reusable, custom-fitted or one-size-fits-all
- may be made of foam, silicone, rubber or plastic
- are comfortable in hot weather
- are inexpensive

**but...may be hard to fit**

**Earmuffs**
- cut noise by as much as 25 decibels
- are easy to put on and take off
- come in specialised forms for high voltage work or for filtering out only hazardous noises
- may be worn with earplugs for extremely high noise levels

**but...are bulky**
- ...may be uncomfortable in hot weather

**Canal Caps**
- are soft pads on a headband
- seal the ear canal without actually entering it
- are comfortable, cool and light

**but...may not completely seal the ear canal**
- ...are less effective than earplugs or earmuffs

Never try to protect hearing with
- stereo headphones
- cotton wads

They don't work!

**Treat your hearing protection right...**
- Use the right protection for your workplace.
- Use and maintain your hearing protection according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Use it whenever noise level is high - not just sometimes.