NIOSH Reducing Noise Hazards in Call Centers



Prevention recommendations for workers at call and dispatch centers who may suffer health risks associated with high noise levels.

Description of Exposure

Millions of workers at call and dispatch centers in the United States use headsets during most of their workday. They mainly include dispatchers, medical transcriptionists, air traffic control specialists, customer service representatives, switchboard operators, reservationists, and bill collectors. Many work in high-pressure, stressful environments with noisy surroundings and poor ergonomic conditions. [NIOSH, 1997, 2005, 2007, 2008; avhed and Toomingas 2007; Patel and Broughton 2002]. Although these other factors can pose additional health risks to workers, the scope of this document is limited to providing recommendations for reducing noise hazards.

NIOSH research shows that workers at call and dispatch centers may…