

Hearing Protection Services

I have joked many times that Heavy Metal ruined my hearing, but it may be a different Heavy Metal than I was referring to. Many of us Gear Heads have spent time tuning over an open exhaust.

Personally, I had a straight pipe between my legs from a Bug I was racing back in 2006. It never occurred to me that I might consider protecting my hearing. I recently sat down with Mark Reid with Hearing Protection Services and here is what I learned. Mark started Hearing Protection Services after attending the 2009 NRA Gun Show in Phoenix. "I went to school in Boulder but the key to my success has been skill development," said Mark. "Every individual has unique ear canals, often they are different on each side.

The quality of your hearing is made up of physical structures you're born with and the environments you have been exposed too during your entire lifetime. Protecting your hearing is important because hearing damage is permanent and lifelong. The youngest set I made was for an 11-month-old." "I make a mold of the persons ear, so I get a custom fit every time. On-site, at an event, I use chemically cured silicone. For Lab Plugs I use heat cured silicone," explained Mark. "You would need to make an appointment to have one made in the lab which can be done through our website or just call me. I have made them for individuals in the construction and manufacturing industry at both events at their worksite or by appointment. I have made custom earplugs at General Mills for 7 years.

"Cost is one thing. I am going to be more expensive than generic, over the counter, non-custom earplugs.

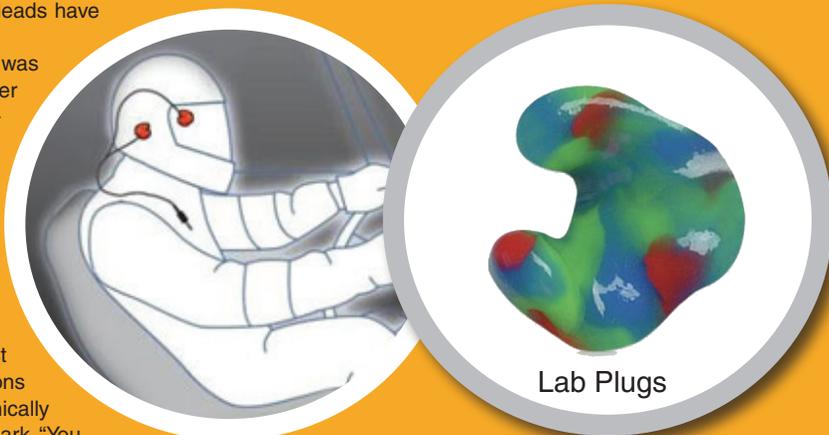
The major difference is the custom fit. The biggest single word in hearing conservation is 'fit'. If it doesn't fit you properly, it doesn't work; and you are not getting the protection the earplug is rated for." Mark continued. "Durability is another difference with our product. It depends on what you do, a weekend shooter used a set of on-site plugs for 25 years." Reid also expanded on his explanation, "The Silicon's durability sometimes outlasts the user's body shape. Your body changes and a new mold may be needed every three years or if your weight changes by 20 lbs or more."

When it comes to us racers, helmets help but it depends on the grade of helmet. "Helmets don't help drown out enough background noise. Custom fit Raceievers helps them reduce the background noise and allows them to hear their communications better" said Mark. "The majority of damage comes from constant exposure over time but a single event can damage your hearing just as bad if not worse. For example, a one day shooting event left me as a candidate for a hearing aid. in my left ear because of a failure with the earplugs I was using. There is no recovery, your hearing does not regenerate," Mark illustrated in reference to his own hearing damage. Possible hearing damage Warning signs: headache, ringing in the ears, muffled sounds or pain

"You can suffer an extreme exposure about 3 times in your life, but if it's strong enough the damage is permanent. Even if it's just the first exposure.

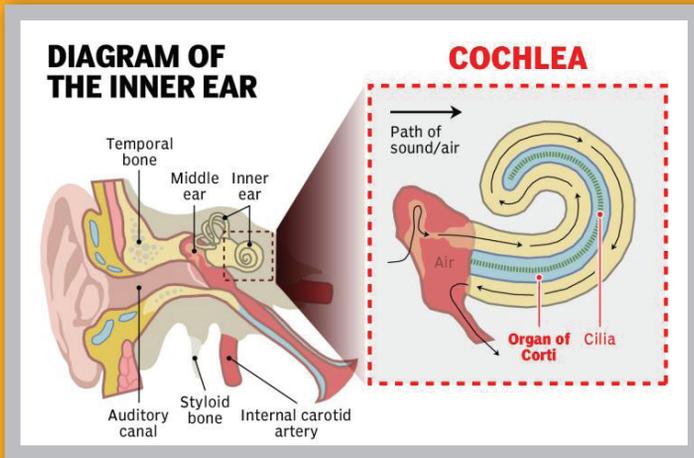
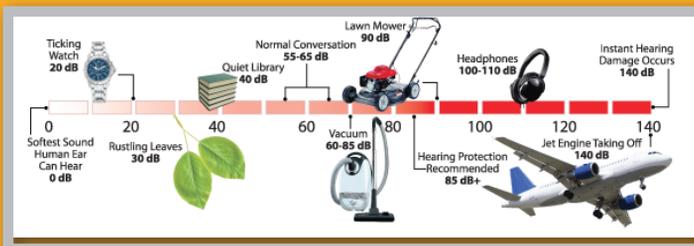
"Protect what you have," warned Mark.

For more information contact Mark Reid at Hearing Protection Services at 505-275-7584 or by email at mark.reid@hpssw.com.



Lab Plugs

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Call us at 505.275.PLUG(7584)

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