



CASE STUDY

Treescape

Prioritising hearing health and supporting Deaf and hard of hearing employees at Treescape.

Patrick Crowskey, Treescape.

Putting the spotlight on inclusivity and noise safety.

“Treescape are very proud to be one of the first companies to become a fully Hearing Accredited Workplace. We are committed to working alongside the National Foundation for Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the future to ensure that we are inclusive of employees who are Deaf and hard of hearing and to minimise the risk of hearing loss for our current employees,” says Patrick Crowskey, Chief People & Safety Officer.

“

WE ARE COMMITTED TO ENSURING THAT WE PROTECT THE HEARING OF OUR EXISTING EMPLOYEES AND REMAIN AN INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE TO EMPLOYEES WHO ARE DEAF OR HEARD OF HEARING.

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**Treescape**[®]



Starting the hearing awareness journey.

Treescape partnered with the National Foundation for Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NFDHH) in 2019 as a foundation member of the Hearing Accredited Workplace Programme. Treescape received practical tools and training to become more inclusive of the 880,000+ New Zealanders who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

Working alongside NFDHH, Treescape has put into place multiple initiatives that better support those who are Deaf and hard of hearing and to ensure our staff do not incur hearing loss while at work.

Taking action.

Treescape has made some significant changes to the way the organisation operates day to day to ensure team members who are Deaf or hard of hearing are supported and that the risks of noise-induced hearing loss are mitigated. These include:

- The team communicating using Microsoft Teams with captioning, to ensure those who are Deaf or hard of hearing can fully participate in meetings, in online conference calls and in the field.
- Treescape has updated the organisation's emergency evacuation plan to ensure staff and visitors are evacuated safely, even if they are unable to hear the alarm.
- Regular free online and in-person hearing checks are made available to all staff to monitor hearing health and raise awareness about the warning signs of hearing loss. This is essential for helping to ensure hearing health is maintained.
- To improve safety in the field, employees have

been trained to use hand signals to communicate between ground staff and arborists, in addition to using walkie talkies. The walkie talkies can also be adjusted to suit the user (i.e. volume can be turned up).

Upcoming changes.

In addition to these steps, a nationwide project is in progress to standardise Treescape-issued hearing protection. Treescape will be upgrading to the best gear on the market; 3M fit test helmets. Once this is achieved, Treescape will be able to test each set to ensure the maximum protection is achieved by adjusting helmet straps (so the muffs sit in the correct position), and ensuring the hygiene kits seal properly around the ears.

Treescape will also be purchasing more electric chainsaws, which are much quieter than their fuel-powered counterparts, further protecting their employees' hearing.

Treescape is committed to working with the NFDHH in the coming years to ensure that we protect our employees' hearing and are providing an inclusive workplace where employees who are Deaf or hard of hearing can thrive.



NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR
Deaf & Hard of Hearing