

Acoustical Terms – Let's Use Them Properly

I just attended the 34th NHCA annual conference in Atlanta. It was an outstanding event because of the quality and quantity of the presentations (both at the podium and as posters) and because of the enthusiastic audience. However, in some of the presentations there were misuses of acoustics terms; in particular of the term “intensity” and “sound level”. Unfortunately, this is something that can often be heard at acoustical events and be read in publications.

As with any other science, Acoustics has its own terms and definitions. Most of them are included in the ANSI Standard S1.1-1994 (2004) “Acoustical Terminology”. There it can be found that “sound pressure is the root-mean-square instantaneous sound pressure at a point, during a given time interval. Unit, pascal (Pa)” (3.53). On the other hand “sound intensity is the average rate of sound energy

transmitted in a specific direction at a point through a unit area normal to this direction at the point considered.” Unit, watt per square meter (W/m²). (3.62). Further down the sound pressure level is defined in 4.08 and sound intensity level in 4.04.

It is obvious that although the sound pressure level and the sound intensity levels are both measured in dB, we are dealing with two completely different (although somehow related) quantities and units that should not be used as synonyms.

Respectfully,
Alberto Behar

See A. Behar, Intensity and sound pressure level, J. Acoust. Soc. Am. 76(2), August 1984 (632)

Letter to the Editor of Spectrum

Dear Editor,

I thoroughly enjoyed the 34th Annual Conference in Atlanta in February. The quality of the program, the exhibits, the social events, and the networking opportunities were outstanding. Thanks to the Program Committee for yet another successful meeting.

Along with the great program, this conference marked the presentation of the first Safe in Sound Award, and four extremely deserving recipients were on hand to accept their awards. Congratulations to Domtar, Montgomery County, Pratt & Whitney for their efforts in hearing loss prevention, and to Sensaphonics for innovations – for all, a job well done.

This prestigious award, demonstrating excellence in hearing loss prevention endeavors, set a high bar, which these recipients appeared to leap over with ease. Each award winner had an opportunity to tell the audience about their hearing loss prevention philosophy and strategies and the methods by which they reached their goals. Some innovative ideas were presented that won the respect of the entire audience.

As I continued to think about the presentations, it occurred to me that a notable feature and one worthy of mention, was that none of the recipients made reference to the costs involved with their approach to hearing loss prevention. Although I have no doubt some of the strategies presented were expensive indeed, cost of the program was not a concession for any of these winners. Clearly, each company has come to realize the need for quality in their program and more importantly, they appreciate the value of excellence.

How fortunate we are to have stellar companies that practice hearing loss prevention in this manner. They ‘get it’. They are doing a terrific job, despite the cost, and will reap the benefits of their efforts for many years to come.

Congratulations and thank you for your inspiration!

Respectfully,
Mary McDaniel

NHCA ELECTION RESULTS

The results of this year's NHCA election are as follows

President: Rick Neitzel
President-Elect: Susan Griest
Secretary-Treasurer: Jerry Jensema
Director of Communication: Laura Kauth
Member Delegate: Tom Lloyd
Commercial Delegate: David Mayou
PSO Delegate: Rick Stepkin
Director of Marketing and Public Relations (appointed): Renee Bessette

Officers and Executive Council Members continuing in office in 2009 are:

Past President: Deanna Meinke
Director of Education: Brian Fligor
Director of Membership: Carol Stephenson
Member Delegate: D. Bruce Kirchner
Associate Delegate: Karen Turner
Student Delegate: Cory Portnuff
Historian: Elliott Berger

*NHCA congratulates the new Officers and Council Members!
Thank you to all members who ran for office for your commitment to the organization.*