

**TITLE: HEARING CONSERVATION****Document Number: *****Issue Date:**

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Revision Date:

1 Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide standards and processes for establishing and maintaining a hearing conservation program. This program is designed to protect the hearing of workers at **(Insert Company Name)** who may be exposed to occupational noise at jobsites.

2 Responsibilities

The Site Safety and Health Officer is responsible ensuring that monitoring for noise levels is conducted at jobsites where there is the potential for noise exposure in excess of established limits and for determining hearing conservation areas. The Occupational Physician is responsible for coordinating the required audiometric testing and medical surveillance of affected members.

3 Policy Content

3.1 ELEMENTS OF HEARING CONSERVATION PROGRAM

The following elements are included in **(Insert Company Name)** Hearing Conservation Program:

- Noise exposure monitoring
- Audiometric testing
- Hearing protection
- Training
- Recordkeeping

3.2 EXPOSURE MONITORING

When the noise levels in a work area may exceed 80 dBA, sound level measurements are taken using an A-weighted sound level meter. If sound level measurements determine noise levels to be above 80 dBA, noise dosimetry is conducted to determine an employee's full shift noise exposure levels. If noise dosimetry determines exposures above the 85 dBA action limit, that area is considered to be a hearing conservation area, and all workers in that area enter the hearing conservation program.

If noise dosimetry determines exposures above the 90 dBA exposure limit, all workers in that area enter the hearing conservation program and are required to wear hearing

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protection in that area. The area shall then be evaluated to determine feasible engineering controls to reduce noise exposures below the 90 dBA exposure limit.

3.3 AUDIOMETRIC TESTING

Audiometric testing will be conducted for all workers who may work in an area where the noise levels equal or exceed the 8-hour 85 dBA action limit. A baseline audiogram is conducted within 1 year of a worker's first exposure at or above the action limit. Workers are required to wear hearing protection in a hearing conservation area prior to receiving their baseline audiogram.

Audiometric testing is repeated annually for all workers in the hearing conservation program. Evaluation of audiograms to determine whether a standard threshold shift occurred shall be made by the audiologist.

If a threshold shift has occurred, the affected worker will be re-tested within 30 days to determine whether it is a standard or a temporary threshold shift. Hearing protection is required until re-testing is done. If the re-test confirms the standard threshold shift, the occupational physician will determine follow-up procedures. Audiometric test requirements shall meet those mandated by OSHA under 29 CFR 1910.95.

3.4 HEARING PROTECTION

A variety of ear plugs and ear muffs will be made available to all workers in a hearing conservation area. Hearing protection is required:

- for all workers exposed to noise levels greater than 90 dBA
- for all workers in a Hearing Conservation Area who have not yet had a baseline audiogram established
- for any worker who has experienced a standard threshold shift

Hearing protectors must attenuate employee exposure to less than 85 dBA 8-hr TWA. This shall be determined by the Industrial Hygienist.

3.5 TRAINING

Training will be conducted for each affected worker. The training program shall cover the following topics:

- the effects of noise on hearing
- information on hearing protectors, including advantages, disadvantages, and attenuation of various types; and instruction on selection, use and care.
- the purpose of audiometric testing and an explanation of test procedures

3.6 RECORDKEEPING AND ACCESS TO RECORDS

A copy of OSHA's Occupational Noise Exposure Standard (29 CFR 1910.95) is posted and is also made available to all members. Noise exposure records are kept in the Site Specific

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Health and Safety Plan. At the completion of a project, the Site Specific Health and Safety Plans are retained at the (Insert Company Name) headquarters.

Audiometric test records are maintained in the medical records file for each employee at the (Insert Company Name) headquarters.

Exposure and audiometric test records are available upon request to the affected worker.

References

29 CFR 1910.95 Occupational Noise Exposure

Appendices

None