



Hearing Conservation Program

SCOPE AND APPLICATION:

The objective of this Hearing Conservation Program is to eliminate noise induced occupational hearing loss while complying with OSHA's regulation 1910.95. This program applies to all persons working in areas or with equipment that noise exposure exceeds an 8-hr Time Weighted Average (TWA) of 85 dBA, slow response, or higher. All departments affected will maintain a copy of this program.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Safety Program Coordinator's Responsibilities:

- To budget for cost of the audiometric testing, purchasing and hearing protection devices.
- To ensure maintenance supervisor is knowledgeable on this program and to supervise the use and care of the hearing protection by their employees.
- To determine where high noise levels exist in operations.
- Coordinating Annual Testing
- Maintaining required records
- Employee Training
- Coordinating Noise Surveys
- Communicate program to affected departments

Maintenance Supervisor's Responsibilities:

- Ensure maintenance employees wear hearing protection as required.
- Provide appropriate hearing protection equipment.
- Disciplinary action for non-compliance

Employees' Responsibilities:

- Wear hearing protection as they have been trained
- Notify their supervisor if they notice increase/decrease of noise, change in the environment
- Daily care and maintenance of hearing protection.

NOISE MONITORING:

Sound surveys will be conducted to determine occupational noise levels that employees are exposed to. This may be accomplished by the use of sound level meters and personal dosimeters. In addition, a sound level survey will be conducted whenever new equipment is installed, a change in equipment or process or controls affects the noise levels, or whenever there are any significant changes in the work place that effect the noise levels.

Results of the surveys and monitoring will be communicated to the effected employee. Records of all noise monitoring will be maintained permanently.

All areas with noise levels exceeding 85dBA will have caution signs posted to inform employees of the high noise level in the area and that hearing protection is required.

EMPLOYEE AUDIOMETRIC TESTING

All employees whose exposures equal or exceed an 8-hr time weighted average of 85dBA and are required to work in posted high noise areas are required to take a baseline audiogram at the time of employment. Licensed or certified audiologist, otolaryngologist or other physician who is certified by the Council of Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation will perform this test. This will be at no cost to the employee.

New employees should be tested within 1 month of employment. The hiring Supervisor will arrange testing in coordination with the safety program coordinator. The results of the hearing test are used solely to determine a baseline.

All employees working in posted high noise areas are required to take an annual hearing test. Scheduling will allow employees to be tested during normal working hours. Supervisors should make the necessary schedule and/or staffing arrangements to allow employees the opportunity to be tested.

In order to obtain a valid test, managers shall ensure that employees being tested have not been exposed to occupational noise in excess of 85dBA for 14 hours prior to testing. This can be accomplished by strictly enforcing the use of hearing protection in high noise areas.

A letter will be sent to all employees notifying them of the results of their hearing test. The technician at the medical office will monitor employee audiograms and results. The technician will then communicate any changes to the employee and program coordinator.

Employees with a Standard Threshold Shift (STS) shall be notified of the threshold shift within 21 days from the date the program coordinator is made aware of the STS. Each employee with a STS will receive individual counseling from the program coordinator within this time frame.

Counseling will consist of the specific requirements of 1910.95 (g) and employees are required to sign a form acknowledging that these requirements are met.

PERSONAL HEARING PROTECTION

The use of hearing protection is mandatory in all posted high noise areas. Each affected department is responsible for providing hearing protection for their employees. Several types of hearing protection will be approved for use and employees will be given the opportunity to choose the type of hearing protection they wish to use.

Disposable earplugs should be readily available for use by any visitors to high noise areas. Department managers should ensure that visitors entering their area are informed of the hazards present and the required use of hearing protection.

EMPLOYEE TRAINING

OSHA requires that all employees exposed to 85dBA or above must receive training on an annual basis. The training will include the following: the effects of noise on hearing, the disadvantages and advantages of hearing protectors, the types, selection, use, and care of those protectors, and the purpose of audiometric testing and procedures involved.

DATA MANAGEMENT

Employee audiograms and sound surveys will be analyzed by outside consultants who will provide testing and survey results and recommendations to the safety program manager. The safety program coordinator will maintain sound survey results and recommendations.

Employee audiograms, medical referrals, and threshold counseling forms will be kept in the employee's medical surveillance file in the human resources department. Information in the medical surveillance files is not to be released without the employee's permission.

JOB ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRING HEARING PROTECTION

Riding Mowers
Gas Blowers
Weed Cutters
Chain Saws
Lawn Mowers

APPENDIX A – SPECIFIC ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES

The following are specific assigned responsibilities under this Hearing Conservation Program. The purpose of these assigned responsibilities is to increase ownership in the program at all levels as well as ensuring implementation and compliance with the elements of the program.

Associates identified in each tier group are responsible for performing those specific assignments.

Manager:	Assignment:
Safety Program Coordinator	<i>Overall Program compliance</i>
	<i>Scheduling of Audiometric Testing</i>
	<i>Training</i>
	<i>Maintain records</i>
	<i>Noise Survey</i>

Supervisor:	Assignment:
Maintenance Supervisor	<i>Ensure compliance</i>
	<i>Discipline for non-compliance</i>
	<i>Provide appropriate hearing protection equipment</i>

Employee:	Assignment:
Maintenance Employees	<i>Wear hearing protection as required for job task</i>
	<i>Notify supervisor of hearing loss</i>
	<i>Daily care and maintenance of hearing protection</i>

Others:	Assignment:

APPENDIX B - TRAINING ATTENDANCE SHEET

HEARING CONSERVATION PROGRAM

29 CFR 1910.95

DATE:	
INSTRUCTOR:	
TRAINING A/V MATERIALS:	

NAME:	DEPARTMENT
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