

HEARING CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Exposure

When employees are subjected to sound exceeding those listed in the following table, feasible administrative or engineering controls shall be utilized. If such administrative or engineering controls do not reduce the levels below the table, personal protective equipment shall be provided and used to reduce sound levels within the levels of the table.

PERMISSIBLE NOISE EXPOSURES

<u>Duration per day, hours</u>	<u>Sound level dBA</u>
8	90
6	92
4	95
3	97
2	100
1½	102
1	105
½	110
¼ or less	115

Whenever exposure level exceeds an 8-hour time-weighted average sound level of 85dBA, our hearing conservation, as follows, is in effect.

Monitoring

When information indicates that any employee's exposure may equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 dBA, the sound level in that work area shall be monitored at least annually. Where circumstances of high worker mobility or significant variations of sound level make monitoring difficult, personal monitoring shall be done.

Outside consultants shall be used to do the sound level testing. They must provide proof their instruments have been calibrated to ensure measurement accuracy.

Monitoring shall be repeated whenever a change in production, process, equipment or controls increases noise exposure.

Employees shall be notified in writing when their exposure is at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 dBA. At employee's request, they shall be allowed to observe the monitoring and calculation process of their exposure.

Audiometric Testing Program

All employees with an 8-hour time-weighted average exposure of 85 dBA or over shall be subject to audiometric testing. This testing shall be done at no cost to the employee.

Testing will be done within 6 months of placing an employee in a work area where the exposure meets or exceeds the 85 dBA level for an 8-hour time-weighted exposure. This will determine our baseline audiogram. All testing shall be done by a licensed or certified audiologist, physician or technician certified by the Council of Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation. Testing will be done only after 14 hours of no exposure to the noise level in the workplace.

At least annual audiometric testing will be done after the baseline audiogram for every employee that is exposed to an 8-hour time-weighted level of 85 dBA or above. These annual tests shall be compared to the baseline scores to determine any threshold shifts. If any shift is noted from the threshold scores, the employee will be retested within 30 days. The audiologist or physician shall evaluate the results and make recommendations concerning any shift in the threshold scores. Those recommendations shall be followed by management.

If a shift in the threshold level is noted, the employee shall be referred for a clinical audiological evaluation or an otological examination.

Hearing Protection

Management shall make hearing protectors available to all employees exposed to an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 dBA or greater at no cost to the employees. Employees shall be given the opportunity to select their hearing protectors from a variety of suitable hearing protectors. Hearing protectors shall be replaced as necessary. Hearing protection shall be appropriate for the noise exposure. Management shall ensure the hearing protection is being worn at all times in the exposure work areas.

Any employee who has not had his baseline test completed shall wear hearing protection at all times in all work areas. Any employee who has experienced a standard threshold shift shall wear hearing protection at all times in all work areas.

Hearing protectors must attenuate employee exposure to an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 dBA or below.

Training Program

Training in the use and care of all hearing protectors provided shall be conducted by management prior to placement of the employee (in indoctrination), when there is a change in the type of protectors provided, and annually thereafter.

Training shall include the effects of noise on hearing, the purpose of hearing protection, instructions on use of hearing protectors, the purpose of testing, and the explanation of the audiometric testing procedure.

Recordkeeping

All records of exposure, testing and hearing protector use shall be maintained for two years after the termination of the employment of the exposed person.