



City of Montpelier, Vermont
"The Smallest Capital City in the United States"

HEARING CONSERVATION

Last Updated April 15, 2004

Hearing Conservation

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Purpose

This program was created to provide our employees with procedures and policies to properly protect them against the effects of noise exposure. This program was prepared in accordance with OSHA regulation Section 1910.95 Occupational Noise Exposure.

This program applies to all facilities that have operations which produce employee noise exposures in excess of 85 dBA time weighed average (TWA) for eight hours.

Copies of this program will be located at each site or with each piece of equipment where the sound levels exceed the recommended limits established in Table G-16 of Section 1910.95.

Program Administrator

The program administrator will be responsible for annual review of the program, coordination of employee training, baseline hearing test, noise audits and the selection of noise control procedures.

Employees should refer questions or comments about this program to the administrator.

The program administrator is

Eric Ladd, Public Works Department Supervisor

Annual Review

The program shall be evaluated each June to determine the effectiveness of this program.

See evaluation form-page 7

Noise Audits

A. All locations and equipment must be audited annually to determine if it exceeds 90 decibels-TWA.

B. All locations and equipment that exceed the 85 dBA limit shall be conspicuously marked to notify employees of the risk.

C. A list of all locations and equipment that exceeds the limit shall be maintained by the program administrator.

D. Noise audits will be conducted using:

- Sound level meter (multiple samples taken throughout workday) _____
- Noise dosimeter (for employees working in numerous locations) _____
- Equipment manufacturer’s noise specifications _____

Employees will be given the opportunity to observe noise audits monitoring and will be notified of noise audit results.

See noise audit worksheet – page 8

Audiometric Testing

1. Audiometric testing will be performed on all employees whose exposures equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average TWA of 85 decibels (Action level). **All employees shall receive a base line audiometric test and new employees as part of their pre-employment physical.**
2. Audiometric testing will be provided at no cost to employees.
3. Audiometric testing will be performed by a licensed or certified audiologist, otolaryngologist, or other physician, or by a technician who is certified by the Council of Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation, or who has satisfactorily demonstrated competence in administering audiometric examinations. A technician who performs audiometric tests must be responsible to an audiologist, otolaryngologist or physician.

Name of audiometric testing consultant

Name	Address	Telephone
OH&R	654 Granger Road, Suite 1 Barre, VT 05641	802-223-7499
Industrial Hearing Testing		

4. Baseline Audiogram
 1. A baseline audiogram will be conducted within 6 months of an employee's first exposure at above the action level in order to establish a valid baseline audiogram against which subsequent audiograms can be compared.
 2. Mobile test van exception. Where mobile test vans are used to meet the audiometric testing obligation, the Department Head will obtain a valid baseline audiogram within 1 year of an employee's first exposure at or above the action level. Where baseline audiograms are obtained more than 6 months after the employee's first exposure at or above the action level, employees will wear hearing protectors for any period exceeding six months after first exposure until the baseline audiogram is obtained.
 3. Testing to establish a baseline audiogram will be preceded by at least 14 hours without exposure to workplace noise. Hearing protectors may be used as a substitute for the requirement that baseline audiograms be preceded by 14 hours without exposure to workplace noise.
 4. The Department Head will notify employees of the need to avoid high levels of non-occupational noise exposure during the 14-hour period immediately preceding the audiometric examination.
5. Audiograms will be conducted at least annually after obtaining the baseline audiogram for each employee exposed at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels.
6. The Department Head will maintain a record of all employee audiometric test records. This record will include:
 1. Name and job classification of the employee.
 2. Date of the audiogram.
 3. The examiner's name.
 4. Date of the last acoustic or exhaustive calibration of the audiometer.
 5. Employee's most recent noise exposure assessment.

Engineering Controls

Whenever possible and feasible every effort will be made to purchase reduced noise equipment. When practical, equipment may be modified to reduce noise to a level below the 85 db threshold.

Administrative Controls

Table G-16(a) indicates the total time of exposure permitted at each noise level with out hearing attenuation. Supervisors must make sure employees are not exposed to noise beyond the permitted total time of the sound level.

Permissible Noise Exposures
29CFR 1910.95 App. A Table G-16(a)

Hearing Protectors

The Department Head shall ensure the hearing protectors are worn:

1. By any employee who is subjected to sound levels equal to or exceeding an 8-hour TWA of 90 decibels.
2. By any employee who has experienced a persistent Standard Threshold Shift and who is exposed to 8-hour TWA of 85 decibels or greater.

Employees will be given the opportunity to select their hearing protectors from a variety of suitable hearing protectors at no cost to them.

Employees will be held accountable for properly using and maintaining the equipment furnished.

Employee Information and Training

Employees will be trained on the effects of noise on hearing. Employees will be trained on the purpose of hearing protection including the advantages and disadvantages of various hearing protection, and instructions on selection, fitting, use and care of hearing protection. Employees will be trained on the purpose of audiometric testing and how tests will be administered.

Training will include:

- a. An overview of Section 1910.95- *See Appendix A- page 11*
- b. The details of this program
- c. The effects of noise on hearing
- d. The purpose and use of hearing protector
- e. Advantages and disadvantages of various types of hearing protectors
- f. Instruction in the selection, fitting, use and care of protectors
- g. The purpose of the audiometric testing and an explanation of testing procedures
- h. Who to contact for more information

Training should be conducted by a competent person as demonstrated by knowledge and experience. The name of the trainer, qualifications, training materials used, course content and date of training shall be documented.

See employee training form-page 9

Employees will be given a test to determine their understanding of the program. New hires and transfers will be tested prior to beginning their duties. Employees who do not receive 100 percent on the test will be retrained in those areas that were answered incorrectly.

The test will be retained as proof of training.

See employee test form- page 10

Record Keeping

Noise exposure records will be retained for two years.

Audiometric tests records will be retained for the duration of the affected workers' employment.

Outside Contractors

The program administrator shall inform all contractors of the elements of this program. Contractors must also make a copy of their hearing conservation program available to the Department Head. Contractors who fail to follow the program requirements will be asked to leave the premises. Contractors with an insufficient program will not be allowed to begin work until their program meets or exceeds the requirements of this program.

Violation of Hearing Conservation Program

Employees who violate the hearing conservation program procedures will be disciplined according to the personnel policy/plan and or collective bargaining agreements. Employees will also be required to attend retraining on the procedures or policies that were violated.

Annual Program Evaluation

Program Name:

HEARING CONSERVATION

Evaluation Date:

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Evaluation Team:

Name	Title	Department

List injuries, exposures or near misses attributable to failure of program or failure to follow program:

Recommendations for additions to procedures/policies with explanation for each:

Recommendations for deletions of procedures/policies with explanation for each:

Were noise audit lists complete:

Yes / No

Recommendations for modifications to procedures/policies with explanation for each:

Description and date of actual modifications made:

Hearing Conservation Employee Training

City of Montpelier

Instructor's Name:

Date:

Address:

Qualifications:

Course Outline:

List of employees receiving training

Employee Name

Signature

Instructor's Signature

Hearing conservation Learning Exercise

1. Employee participation in the hearing conservation program is required when exposed to an 8-hour TWA noise level of ____ dBA.
2. Hearing damage can easily be repaired. TRUE/FALSE
3. The City is required to keep records of noise monitoring and hearing test. TRUE/FALSE
4. Name two kinds of hearing protection devices _____ and _____.
5. In departments with a hearing conservation program, hearing tests are done every other year. TRUE/FALSE
6. Engineering controls are one way management can control noise levels. TRUE/FALSE
7. High noise levels in the work place can have a negative impact on your work TRUE/FALSE
8. Employees that violate the hearing conservation program will be disciplined. TRUE/FALSE
9. Any hearing protection can be used for all noise levels. TRUE/FALSE
10. It is the responsibility of the employee to wear the appropriate hearing protection when needed. TRUE/FALSE
11. Hearing protection is to be provided at no cost to the employee. TRUE/FALSE

Appendix A

To view and download the Section 1910.95 hearing conservation regulations from the OSHA web site, click on the following link:

http://www.osha-slc.gov/OshStd_data/1910_95.html

Print out a copy of the standard and mandatory appendices to include with your program.

Appendix B - Answers to Hearing conservation Learning exercise

1. Employee participation in the hearing conservation program is required when exposed to on 8-hour TWA noise level of 85 dBA
2. Hearing damage can easily be repaired. TRUE / FALSE
3. The City is required to keep records of noise monitoring and hearing test. TRUE / FALSE
4. Name two kinds of hearing protection devices earplugs and earmuffs.
5. In departments with a hearing conservation program, hearing tests are done every other year. TRUE / FALSE
6. Engineering controls are one way management can control noise levels. TRUE / FALSE
7. High noise levels in the work place can have a negative impact on your work TRUE / FALSE
8. Employees that violate the hearing conservation program will be disciplined. TRUE / FALSE
9. Any hearing protection can be used for all noise levels. TRUE / FALSE
10. It is the responsibility of the employee to wear the appropriate hearing protection when needed. TRUE / FALSE
11. Hearing protection is to be provided at no cost to the employee. TRUE / FALSE