

Garmong Construction Services					
<i>EMPLOYEE SAFETY POLICY HANDBOOK – Hearing Conservation</i>					
Last Revised:	January 25, 2012	By	Douglas Mahurin, MS, CSP	This Copy Printed:	1/31/2012 4:57:00 PM

Hearing Conservation Program Occupational Noise Exposure 29CFR1910.95

Whenever employee noise exposures equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average sound level (TWA) of 85 decibels measured on the A scale (slow response) or, equivalently, a dose of fifty percent this program comes into effect. Employee noise exposures shall be computed in accordance with 29CFR1910.95 App A and Table G-16a, and without regard to any attenuation provided by the use of personal protective equipment. An 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels or a dose of fifty percent shall be referred to as the action level.

Monitoring

Monitoring will be conducted when it is determined by the Safety Director that employees are exposed to a significant noise level. Any Superintendent or Project Manager may also request that monitoring is conducted at any time they suspect high noise exposures.

Employee Notification

Employees will be notified if it is determined that they are exposed to noise at or above the action level of 85 decibels.

Observation of the Monitoring

The employees also have the right to have a representative observe the monitoring process.

Audiometric Testing Program

We have established and will maintain an audiometric testing program. Audiometric testing is available to all employees exposed to noise at or above the action level. This program is provided at no cost to the employees.

Baseline Audiogram

Within 6 months of an employee's first exposure to noise at or above the action level, a valid baseline audiogram will be completed. This baseline audiogram will be preceded by at least 14 hours without exposure to work place noise.

Annual Audiogram

At least annually thereafter, a new audiogram will be completed for each employee exposed to noise at or above the action level.

Evaluation of Audiogram

Each of these annual audiograms will be compared to the employee's baseline audiogram to determine if the audiogram is valid and if there is a standard threshold shift as defined in the OSHA standards. This comparison will be completed by our medical provider and they will determine if any follow-up or retesting is required.

Follow-Up Procedures

If the comparison of the audiogram to the baseline audiogram indicates a standard threshold shift as defined by the OSHA standards, the employee shall be notified in writing, within 21 days of the determination. Unless a physician determines that the threshold shift is not work related or aggravated by occupational noise exposure, we will ensure that the following steps are taken:

1. Employees not using hearing protectors shall be fitted with hearing protectors, trained in their use and care, and required to use them.

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2. Employees already using hearing protectors shall be refitted and retrained in the use of hearing protectors and provided with hearing protectors offering greater attenuation if necessary.
3. The employee shall be referred to a clinical audiologist evaluation or an ontological examination, as appropriate, if additional testing is necessary or if it is suspected that a medical pathology of the ear is caused or aggravated by the wearing of hearing protectors.
4. The employee is informed of the need for an ontological examination if a medical pathology of the ear that is unrelated to the use of hearing protectors is suspected.

If subsequent audiometric testing of an employee whose exposure to noise is less than an 8-hour TWA of 90 decibels indicates that a standard threshold shift is not persistent, then:

1. The employee shall be informed of the new audiometric interpretation.
2. The required use of hearing protectors may be discontinued.

Revised Baseline

An annual audiogram may be substituted for a baseline audiogram when, in the judgment of the audiologist:

1. The standard threshold shift revealed by the audiogram is persistent.
2. The hearing threshold shown in the annual audiogram indicates significant improvement over the baseline audiogram.

Standard Threshold Shift

As used in this program, a standard threshold shift is a change in hearing relative to the baseline audiogram of an average of 10dB or more at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz in either ear. In determining if a threshold shift has occurred, allowance may be made for the contribution of aging to the change in hearing level by correcting the annual audiogram according to the procedure described in the OSHA standards 29CFR1910.95 Appendix F.

Audiometric Test Requirements

Audiometric tests will be performed by Union Occupational Medicine or other facility approved by the Safety Director and will conform to the requirements of 29CFR1910.95(h) "Audiometric Test Requirements".

Hearing Protectors

Hearing protectors are made available to all employees exposed to a TWA of 85 decibels or greater at no cost to the employees. Hearing protectors will be replaced as necessary.

Hearing protectors will be worn:

1. Any employee who is exposed to a TWA of 85 decibels or more.
2. Any employee who has not had a baseline audiogram completed yet.
3. Any employee who has experienced a standard threshold shift.

Employees will have the opportunity to select their hearing protectors from a variety of hearing protectors. Training will be provided in the use and care of all hearing protectors provided to the employees. Initial proper fitting will be ensured and the correct use of hearing protectors will be supervised.

Hearing Protector Attenuation

The hearing protector attenuation for the specific noise environments in which the protector will be used shall be evaluated using methods outlined in OSHA standard 29CFR1910.95 Appendix B. Hearing Protectors will attenuate employee exposure at least to a 8 hour TWA of 90 decibels. Employees who have experienced a threshold shift, the attenuation will be to an 8-hour TWA of 85 decibels.

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The adequacy of hearing protector attenuation will be re-evaluated whenever employee noise exposures increases to the extent that the hearing protectors provided may no longer provide adequate attenuation. More effective hearing protectors will be provided when necessary.

Training Program

A training program will be provided at least annually for all employees and all employees will participate in the program. The program will be updated to be current and applicable to the processes in use. The minimum contents of the training program are:

1. The effects of noise on hearing
2. The purpose of hearing protectors, the advantages, disadvantages, and attenuation of various types, and the instructions on selection, fitting, use, and care of hearing protectors.
3. The purpose of audiometric testing, and an explanation of the test procedures.

Access to Information and Training Materials

Copies of the OSHA standards are available to the employees. Any other information received pertaining to noise exposure will also be made available to all employees. Upon request, all materials related to the training and education programs are also available to the employees.

Recordkeeping

We will maintain accurate records on:

1. All employee exposure measurements.
2. Audiometric test records to include at a minimum
 - a. Name and job classification of the employee
 - b. Date of the audiogram.
 - c. The Examiner’s name.
 - d. Date of last acoustic or exhaustive calibration of the audiometer.
 - e. Employee’s most recent noise exposure assessment.
 - f. Background sound pressure levels in the audiometric test rooms if provided.

Records will be retained as follows:

1. Noise exposure measurement records will be maintained for two years.
2. Audiometric test records shall be retained for the duration of the affected employee's employment.

All records shall be provided upon request to employees, former employees, representatives designated by the individual employee, and the Assistant Secretary. If we cease to do business, we will transfer to the successor employer all records required to be maintained by this program.