

Hearing Conservation Program
California State University Bakersfield
Rev: 7/96

INTRODUCTION

Cal OSHA (8 CCR 5097) requires a Hearing Conservation Program (HCP) to protect employees from damaging exposure to noise in the workplace. The key elements of this program are sound level surveys, hearing protection training, annual audiometric testing and documentation of data.

SOUND LEVEL SURVEYS

The Office of Safety and Risk (S&R) Management Staff will conduct acoustical measurements of campus employees' noise exposures in accordance with Cal OSHA standards. Employees may observe the measurements and will be notified of their exposure levels. An exposure equal to or exceeding an eight-hour time weighted average (TWA) sound level of 85 decibels will identify the worker for inclusion in the HCP.

AUDIOMETRIC TESTING

Measurement of hearing threshold is used to verify that an employee's hearing is protected. A trained audiometrist will perform this test at least 14 hours after the worker's last exposure to noise. All personnel included in the HCP will be tested yearly as part of the campus medical monitoring program.

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Hearing protection will be provided to all employees exposed to an eight hour TWA of 85 decibels or greater. Hearing protectors will be replaced as needed due to wear. Supervisors shall require use of hearing protectors by employees whose exposures exceed the following permissible levels.

Employees for whom a baseline audiogram has not been established or who have experienced a hearing threshold shift shall be required to use hearing protection if their eight hour TWA equals or exceeds 85 decibels. The noise reduction rating of hearing protectors must be sufficient to attenuate employee exposure to an eight hour TWA of 90 decibels or 85 decibels if a threshold hearing shift has occurred.

TRAINING

Hearing conservation training topics will include the effects of noise on hearing, the purpose of hearing protectors and instruction on selection, fit, use and care of protective equipment. The purpose of audiometric testing and an explanation of test procedures will also be covered. Copies of the OSHA Noise Exposure Control Regulations will be posted in work areas. Supervisors should set a positive example by wearing appropriate hearing protection when they enter or work in high noise areas.

DOCUMENTATION

CSUB will maintain records of exposure measurements for at least 2 years. The CSUB medical monitoring contractor stores audiometric test records and evaluations for 30 years following employee termination or retirement. All records will be provided to employees, former employees or their representatives upon request.