

UNMC Hearing Conservation Plan
University of Nebraska Medical Center
1/9/2015

Administration

It is the policy of this company to institute an occupational hearing conservation program for our construction workers to prevent any temporary or permanent noise-induced hearing loss to employees, and to comply with the federal OSHA standard found at 29 CFR 1926.52.

This written hearing conservation plan serves as a record of the details of the hearing conservation program in place at this company. We have this program in place to protect the hearing of all workers in the company. Elements of the hearing conservation program include:

- Noise Exposure Monitoring,
- Audiometric testing program,
- Hearing Protection,
- Training and Information, and
- Recordkeeping.

John Hauser has overall responsibility for coordinating safety and health programs in this company. John Hauser/Safety Manager is the person having overall responsibility for the Hearing Conservation Program. John Hauser/Safety Manager will review and update the program, as necessary.

Copies of the written program may be obtained from John Hauser/Safety Manager in UNMC Safety Office or online.

Monitoring

The monitoring program is in place to provide an ongoing means of determining employee exposure to noise and protect employees based on excessive exposure.

When information indicates that any employee's exposure may equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels on 3-dB exchange rate (NIOSH), the company develops and implements an appropriate monitoring program to identify all employees for inclusion in the hearing conservation program and to select proper hearing protection. Employees will be enrolled in a hearing conservation program if noise exposure monitoring indicates the individual is exposed to noise levels in excess of 85 dB over an 8 hour time period

To determine employee exposure to noise, we use equipment that is maintained and calibrated the College of Public Health as a part of the safety partnership program. Personal noise exposure monitoring will be conducted by the College of Public Health as part of the College of Public Health and Safety Partnership.

UNMC notifies all employees exposed at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels of the results of the monitoring by the following method. Written notice will be provided.

Affected employees or their representatives may observe any noise measurements conducted by making prior arrangements with the Safety Manager. UNMC selects proper hearing devices for affected employees by the following based on recommendations and evaluations made by the College of Public Health as a part of the safety partnership program.

Monitoring is repeated whenever a change in production, process, equipment or controls increases noise exposures to the extent that either additional employees may be exposed at or above the action level or the attenuation provided by hearing protectors being used by employees may be rendered inadequate to meet the requirements of noise reduction. Noise exposure monitoring will be conducted in the instance of changes in work process including equipment changes.

The audiometric testing program is in place and available at no cost to all affected employees to ensure that noise exposures are kept at proper levels.

Audiometric Testing Program

The program ensures that a valid baseline audiogram is established for exposed employees within 6 months of their first exposure (or within one year if mobile vans are used, with employees wearing hearing protection for any period exceeding six months) by the following method: Testing will be conducted by the UNMC ENT Clinic.

Employees enrolled in the hearing conservation program will be eligible for free audiometric testing provided by the employer. Audiometric testing will be provided to monitor employees' hearing over the course of their employment.

Audiometric testing is repeated annually.

The company determines if standard threshold shift has occurred by the following method: based upon and examination of the audiometric testing.

If subsequent audiometric testing of an employee whose exposure to noise is less than an 8-hour (time weighted average) TWA of 90 decibels indicates that a standard threshold shift is not persistent, the company informs the employee of the new audiometric interpretation by providing written notice to the employee and the use of hearing protectors for that employee is no longer required.

Hearing Protection

The department makes hearing protectors available to each affected employee exposed to an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels or greater at no cost to the employee, according to the following method: Hearing protection will be available in the department/shop and can be reordered or replaced as needed

The department ensures use of available hearing protection by each affected employee according to the following method: proper supervision

The department ensures that employees have a variety of suitable protectors that attenuate (lower) employee exposure at least to an 8-hour time-weighted average of 90 decibels, or 85 decibels or lower for employees. A variety of hearing protection devices will be made available to employees at no cost to them and at the employer expense.

The company ensures evaluation for adequacy of the hearing protection attenuation for the specific noise environments in which the protector will be used, according to specifications given in an appendix to the standard, according to the following method: In most cases the Noise Reduction Rating (NRR) will be used but additional evaluations will be conducted when needed

The company reevaluates attenuation whenever employee noise exposures increase to the extent that current hearing protectors no longer provide adequate attenuation, and then provides more effective hearing protection, according to the following method: Reevaluations will be conducted as a part of the College of Public Health Partnership. Employees will be assisted in choosing the most appropriate hearing protection device. The device should reduce noise to 85 dB, or lower, for the individual

Training and Information

University of Nebraska Medical Center has instituted a hearing protection training program for each employee exposed to noise at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels.

The company ensures employee participation in the hearing protection training program according to the following method: Training will be provided. Training will be scheduled and those employees not completing the required training will be reported to the department's compliance coordinator for follow-up and action.

The company makes copies of the standard available to affected employees or their representatives according to the following method: Copies of the standard will be available online or printed copies can be obtained from the safety office.

The company repeats the training program annually. The company assures that the training material is updated to be consistent with changes in the protective equipment and work processes according to the following method: The program will be reviewed annually in conjunction as a part of the College of Public Health Partnership program.

According to the following method: Information will be included as a part of the annual training informing affected workers on the effects of noise on hearing and the purpose of audiometric testing., the company assures that each affected employee is informed of at least the following information:

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

The company makes informational materials pertaining to the Occupational Noise Exposure standard that are supplied to it by OSHA available to affected employees or their representatives according to the following method: This material will be available online and can also be obtained in the safety office.

Recordkeeping

Recordkeeping is an essential element of the hearing conservation program, since it is the means by which hearing levels are tracked and assessed over a period of years. The company has in place a series of measures to maintain comprehensive and up-to-date records.

The company maintains accurate records of employee exposure measurements according to the following method: exposure measurements will be kept electronically by campus safety

The company maintains accurate records of employee audiometric test records according to the following method: The audiometric test records meeting the requirements of this standard will be kept in Employee Health [Need to work this out since ENT will do testing – not sure Employee Health will put results in chart]

The company retains noise exposure measurement records and audiometric test records as required by OSHA, by the following method: The Safety Office will keep noise exposure measurement records for two years; The ENT Clinic will keep audiometric test records for employees. Audiometric test records for affected employees with threshold shifts will be kept for the duration of employment plus 30 years; and audiometric test records for affected employees with no threshold shift will be kept for the duration of the affected employee's employment. [Need to work this out since ENT will do testing – not sure Employee Health will put results in chart]

The company provides access to records to employees, former employees, representatives designated by the individual employee, and OSHA, upon request according to the following method: The UNMC Safety Office will coordinate requests for access to records by coordinating with Human Resources and Employee Health.

In addition, when an employee experiences a standard threshold shift, the standard threshold shift is work-related, and the employee's total hearing loss equals or exceeds 25 dB from audiometric zero in the same ear(s) as the standard threshold shift, then the hearing loss case must be recorded on the OSHA 300 Log, in accordance with 29 CFR 1904.