

## **Hearing conservation**

### **Applicable regulations and policies**

29 CFR 1910.95 Occupational Noise Exposure

EHS 110: Hearing Conservation

### **Applicability**

Applies to all Arizona State University or ASU employees whose noise exposures equals or exceeds an 8- hour time weighted average or TWA sound level of 85 decibels or dB while performing their work activities. These employees must be enrolled into the hearing conservation program.

The program shall also apply to those employees who are exposed to noise in excess of the OSHA permissible exposure limits or PEL for durations less than 8 hours. When feasible engineering and/or administrative controls do not reduce the noise level to or below PEL's, proper hearing protection devices must be used.

### **Requirements**

#### **Departments:**

- Administer and maintain this program in the department.
- Assisted by EHS, train employees on the hazards of noise exposure at work and away from work, signs of hearing loss and proper use of hearing protective devices.
- Document activities including noise monitoring, equipment evaluations and selection, results in audiometric testing, and training.
- Ensure exposed employees are included in the audiometric testing program and that employees participate and receive baseline within 6 months of the employees' first exposure at or above 85 dBA and annual tests. For an exposure of concern, or possible work-related hearing loss, more timely audiometric testing may be indicated.
- Ensure workers use appropriate hearing protection when required.
- Identify and report to EHS, new and existing potential sources of noise exposure and have them evaluated if there is a possibility of excessive noise.
- Inform EHS of Standard Threshold Shifts or STS for the OSHA 300 log.
- Inform employees of audiogram results.
- Notify EHS for assistance to conduct a noise level assessment.
- Notify employees of the need to avoid high levels of non-occupational noise exposure during the 14-hour period immediately preceding the audiometric examination.
- Post work areas that are designated as "high" noise exposure work areas, and establish procedures to reduce noise exposure.
- Provide a variety of hearing protective devices appropriate for the noise level for use by "exposed" employees at no cost to the employees.
- Reduce the level of noise from sources through the use of engineering controls or purchase of quieter equipment. Maintain equipment to minimize noise production.

#### **Employees:**

- Attend training classes.
- Follow Department safety procedures that address hearing loss prevention and use hearing protectors as required.
- Receive initial, annual, and termination audiometric tests as scheduled.
- Report work conditions that may result in high noise exposures so the hazard can be evaluated.
- Wear appropriate hearing protection as required.



**Recordkeeping:**

EHS shall maintain an accurate record of all employee exposure measurements. Noise exposure measurement records must be maintained for the duration of employment plus 30 years. Employee records shall be provided upon request by the employee, former employee or designated representative.

**Equipment**

- Earmuffs.
- Earplugs—formable, pre-molded, custom molded.

**Training**

Before using earplugs and/or earmuffs, each employee who is exposed to noise levels at or above an eight-hour TWA of 85 dBA must receive training. This will be provided to employees upon initial work assignment to areas that are identified as excessively noisy, and annually thereafter or upon request.

**Additional information**

Contact ASU EHS: [asuehs@asu.edu](mailto:asuehs@asu.edu)