

OPS-SH-0010

Hearing Conservation Policy

Revision History				
Rev	Date	Document Owner	Approved By	Issue Purpose
0	09/12/2022	R. Courtney	JC	Create new policy
1	07/21/2026	R. Strahan	NR, RS, RG	Update policy to separate by topic and content
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1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a process to minimize employee-hearing loss caused by excessive occupational exposure to noise.

2 Scope

This policy applies to employees whose occupational noise exposure may meet or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA) of 85 dBA. This policy applies to Ampirical Solutions' employees and contractors and shall be used on owned premises or when a client's program does not exist or is less stringent.

3 Definitions

3.1 Audiometric Testing

- Means of detection by the person being tested of a series of pure tones. For each tone, the person indicates the lowest level of intensity that they can perceive.

3.2 Decibels

- A work activity that was stopped due to the potential for serious consequences including: Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH), property damage, environmental impact, or another serious event.

3.3 Noise Reduction Rating (NRR)

- A work activity that was stopped due to the potential for serious consequences including: Immediately Dangerous to Life or Health (IDLH), property damage, environmental impact, or another serious event.

3.4 Standard Threshold Shifts

- A change in hearing threshold relative to the baseline audiogram of an average of 10 dB (corrected for age) at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz in either ear.

4 Responsibility

4.1 HSE Managers

- Ensure that the program complies with applicable OSHA standards.
- Ensure noise exposure hazards are evaluated and controlled where feasible.
- Coordination of required monitoring, training, and audiometric testing as needed.
- Maintain applicable records associated with the program.

4.2 Supervisors/Managers

- Ensure employees comply with hearing conservation requirements.
- Enforce the use of required hearing protection.
- Communicate known noise hazards to employees prior to work activities.

4.3 Employees

- Wear required hearing protection in designated areas.
- Participate in required training and audiometric testing.
- Report concerns regarding excessive noise exposure or defective hearing protection.

5 Procedure

Occupational hearing loss may occur because of repeated or prolonged exposure to elevated noise levels. Ampirical Solutions shall maintain a hearing conservation program for employees whose occupational noise exposure equals or exceeds an 8-hour TWA of 85 dBA. Employees included in the hearing conservation program shall receive hearing protection, training, noise exposure evaluation, and audiometric testing as required by OSHA standards. Hearing protection shall be selected based on the specific noise environments in which it will be used.

5.1 Noise Monitoring and Exposure Assessment

- Noise monitoring shall be conducted whenever employee exposures may equal or exceed an 8-hour TWA of 85 dBA. Monitoring may include area sound level surveys, representative sampling, or personal exposure monitoring based on work activities and equipment utilized.
- Surveys shall be conducted by qualified personnel using properly calibrated equipment appropriate for the environment being evaluated. Monitoring records shall document the survey location, date, equipment utilized, personnel evaluated, and results obtained.
- Additional monitoring shall be performed whenever changes in equipment, processes, work activities, or site conditions may affect employee noise exposure levels or hearing protection effectiveness.

5.2 Signage

- Clearly visible signage shall be posted in areas where employee noise exposures may exceed 85 dBA or where hearing protection is required. Signage shall identify the hearing hazard and specify required protective measures, including mandatory hearing protection where applicable.

5.3 Audiometric Testing

- Employees included in the hearing conservation program shall receive audiometric testing in accordance with OSHA requirements. Baseline audiograms shall be obtained within six months of an employee's first occupational exposure at or above the action level, unless a mobile testing program is utilized, in which case baseline testing may be completed within one year.
- Annual audiometric testing shall be provided thereafter to evaluate any changes in hearing ability. Testing intended to establish a baseline audiogram shall be preceded by at least 14 hours without occupational noise exposure.
- Employees identified as having experienced a Standard Threshold Shift (STS) shall be notified in writing within 21 days of notification of results. Hearing protection requirements shall be reevaluated and additional follow-up actions taken, as necessary.

5.4 Required Recordkeeping

- Accurate records of all employee exposure and audiometric measurements shall be maintained as required by the federal or state regulations. Employee audiograms are considered medical/exposure records. These records must be kept for the length of employment plus 30 years. Employee exposure monitoring and audiometric records shall be made available to employees and their designated representatives in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.

5.5 Hearing Protection Devices

- Appropriate hearing protection shall be provided and maintained at no cost to employees enrolled in the hearing conservation program or working in areas requiring hearing protection. Hearing protection devices shall be properly selected, maintained, and replaced as necessary to ensure adequate attenuation for the noise environment. Employees shall be provided with suitable hearing protection options to ensure proper fit and adequate attenuation for the employee's noise exposure.
- The employer shall evaluate hearing protection for the specific noise environments in which the protector shall be used.
- Engineering and administrative controls shall be evaluated and implemented where feasible to reduce employee noise exposure prior to relying solely on hearing protection devices.
- Employees are required to wear hearing protection whenever required by monitoring results, posted signage, client requirements, or supervisory direction.

6 Training

Employees included in the hearing conservation program shall receive annual training regarding noise hazards, hearing protection, and policy requirements. Training shall be updated as necessary to reflect changes in processes, equipment, or applicable regulations. All training and associated records shall be maintained in accordance with company requirements. A copy of this policy is made available to employees and their representatives upon request.

7 References

29 CFR 1910.95