



Hearing conservation

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SUBJECT: HEARING CONSERVATION 29 CFR 1910.95

PURPOSE: This program is designed to meet the requirements of 29 CFR 1910.95 regarding protection against noise exposure. The implementation of and compliance with this program will aid in reducing the probability of hearing damage due to noise exposure.

It is the goal of Berea College to properly inform all employees of safety and health hazards existing in the work place as identified under 29 CFR 1910.95. The aim of Berea College is to take all reasonable safeguards to minimize risks for exposure to any hazards encountered in the workplace.

## Responsibilities

### *Department Head & Supervisors*

1. Identify all potential workplace noise exposures
2. Ensure compliance with this program by all personnel through daily monitoring of employees.
3. Ensure that all affected employees and student laborers are properly trained in the use of proper hearing protection.
4. Maintain files of all required training documentation as maybe required by Berea College or any other Federal or state agencies.
5. Maintain a safe and healthy work environment that is free of hazard for all departmental employees and student laborers.
6. Maintain an adequate supply of required hearing personal protective equipment for use by departmental employees and student Laborers.

### *Employees & Student laborers*

1. Employees are responsible for attending all scheduled departmental training sessions and those provided by other agencies.
2. Employees are responsible for adhering to safety policies and procedures of their department and safe work policies and procedures of Berea College.
3. Employees are responsible for taking proper safety precautions as outlined within this policy.
4. Employees are responsible for wearing proper protective equipment as specified and/or specified by their supervisor, department policy, and/or the Campus Policy.
5. Will wear approved ear protection devices while working in or around areas determined to be hazardous by noise level surveys.

NOTE-outside contractors and visitors shall be subject to the same regulation or admission will not be permitted unless otherwise stipulated

### General Requirements

*1. MONITORING:* Noise level surveys will be conducted to determine if noise levels in particular areas are above 85 decibels on a 8-hour time-weight average. If employees exposure is equal to or exceeds an 8 hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels, the college will monitor the noise level of the area in question no less than six times each 24 hour period until it can be determined that employees are no longer at risk. This monitoring shall be repeated whenever changes in production, process, equipment or controls increase noise levels.

*2. Employee Notification:* The College will notify each employee exposed at or above an 8-hour time-weight average of 85 decibels. The company shall provide affected employees or their representative with an opportunity to observe any noise measurement taken.

*3. Audiometric Testing:* All affected employees that have potentially exposed to noise levels at or above 85 dba must have audiometric testing performed on them free of charge. Audiometric tests must be performed by a licensed or certified

Audiologist, Otolaryngologist or other physician or by a technician who is certified through the Council of Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation. Within 6 months of an employees first exposure at or above the action level 85 dba, the company will establish a valid baseline audiogram against which other audiograms can be compared. All employees shall have a baseline audiogram evaluation performed within two weeks from their date of hire and acquire an annual audiogram for every year thereafter.

*4. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT:* Personal protective equipment shall be provided when engineering and administrative controls are ineffective at reducing noise levels.

Engineering and administrative controls include but are not limited to: replacing noisy equipment with quieter pieces of machinery, lubrication of moving parts, periodic maintenance of the machines, bolting equipment on firm solid foundations and ensuring that structural features (floors, walls, etc.) do not vibrate or transmit vibrations. If the noise level cannot be reduced to a minimum of 85 dba, workers must be provided with hearing protection. The personal protective equipment must be provided and replaced in several sizes and types at no charge to the employee. It is recommended that all hearing protection be specifically fitted for each employee by a competent member of a medical staff.

The principle types of hearing protection are as follows:

1. Ear plugs - Rubber or plastic devices that fit snugly against the ear canals, blocking the passages against transmission of sound. Earplugs come in a variety of sizes and types to ensure a snug fit.
2. Ear muffs - Cover the entire ear and some of the bony areas around the ear through which sound might be conducted. They offer better protection than do ear plugs and are easily fitted and adjusted and are put on and taken off easily. However, workers sometimes complain of headaches caused by the compression effect against the head. They are often uncomfortable in high-temperature environments. Special types must be used if they are to be worn with hats or other headgear.

## Training

All employees should be monitored on a daily basis to insure the proper use of the hearing protection through a supervisor's daily inspection program and weekly by a safety department's inspection program. The following areas should be covered in the hearing conservation training program. The areas are as follows:

- a. Effects of noise on hearing
- b. The purpose of hearing protectors
- c. The advantages, disadvantages and attenuation of various types of hearing protectors
- d. Instruction on hearing protection selection, fitting, use and care
- e. The purpose of audiometric testing with the explanation of testing procedures
- f. Daily cleaning and sanitizing of hearing protection equipment with hot water and soap.

At the end of each training session, employees should be required to sign a memorandum of understanding stating that they fully understand the responsibilities and requirements they must comply with. The employer shall make available to affected employees or their representatives' copies of the training, the standard and shall post a copy of CFR 1910.95 in the workplace. In addition, the company shall post signs reminding the employees of their responsibilities in areas where hearing protection is required.

## Auditing

An auditing review of this policy shall be done on an annual basis. This auditing review shall include the review of all individual departmental training documentation, the employee/student-training program, and current compliance with Berea College Safety and Health polices, and or compliance with any applicable state and federal agency requirements.

## Discipline

Failure to comply with this policy could cause disciplinary action to be taken against the offending student, employee, supervisor or department head. Any disciplinary action that is taken is to be done using the existing employment policies and practices of Berea College.