

Hearing Conservation Overview

Refer to sign-in sheet for attendees (note: a separate meeting should be held with all absent employees).

1. Overview:

Repeated exposure to elevated levels of noise can cause hearing loss. Once it occurs, hearing loss is permanent and cannot be reversed. OSHA requires employers to evaluate noise level exposures in the workplace and if exposure exceeds 85 dBA/8-hour time weighted average to have a written hearing conservation program and offer hearing protection to its employees. If exposures exceed 90 dBA/8-hour time weighted average then hearing protection use is mandatory. Noise induced hearing loss can be prevented. Use of hearing protection is equally applicable at home as it is in the workplace.

2. Examples of High Noise Sources:

A general rule of thumb is that if you have to raise your voice to speak to a person that is 2-3 feet away, it is possible that noise levels are elevated in the workplace and should be monitored.

Electric Motors	Compressors
Power Tools	Metal Working Machinery
Impact Tools	Trucks
Loud Music	Shooting Sports
Motorcycles	Powered Lawn Care Equipment

3. Employer Hearing Conservation Program Requirements Overview:

- Identify and implement feasible engineering controls to reduce noise in the workplace.
- Employee noise exposure monitoring
 - Initial and then repeated as conditions change, e.g., addition or removal of equipment.
 - Communicate results to employees.
- Employee audiometric testing (hearing tests)
 - Within 6 months of hire and then annually thereafter.
 - Communicate results to employees.
- Hearing protection devices
 - Offer hearing protection if exposures are between 85-89 dBA/8-hour time weighted average and mandatory use if exposure $\geq$ 90 dBA/8-hour time weighted average.
 - Plugs or muffs (protection must attenuate noise levels in ear to at least 85 dBA)
 - Plugs are better than muffs in reducing noise to the ear.
- Employee training
 - Initial and then annually thereafter for employees in the hearing conservation program.
- Recordkeeping
 - Employer to maintain written program, exposure monitoring and audiometric data.

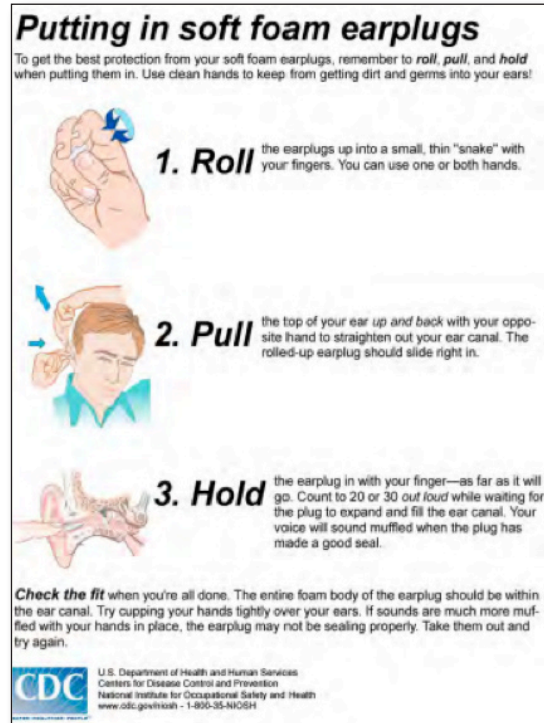
4. Employee Responsibilities Overview:

- Know and understand where hearing protection is required by the employer in the workplace.
- Wear hearing protection in accordance with the employer's hearing conservation program.

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- When using muffs, minimize hair and other items from between the muff's seal and the head.
- Use good hygiene practices, i.e., clean hands and clean hearing protection.
- Inspect hearing protection prior to use.
- Maintain hearing protection in good condition.
- A good practice is to wear hearing protection outside of work in high noise conditions.

Correct way to install foam plugs:



5. Discussion:

- Where is hearing protection required in the workplace?
- Demonstrate the correct way to install ear plugs.

6. Reminder:

- Safety is the responsibility of both management and employees!

Next Safety Meeting is scheduled for _____ and the topic will be _____.

Take Exam / Review Results

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