

Occupational Noise Exposure

OAR 437

Division 2/G

Division 3/D

Division 4/G

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General Requirements

An employer must have in place an effective hearing conservation program whenever employee noise exposures equal or exceed an 8-hour Time Weighted Average (TWA) of 85 decibels measured on the A-scale (85 dBA). A TWA of 85 dBA corresponds to a noise dose of 50%, also called the action level.

Employers must provide protection against the harmful effects of noise when employees are exposed to excessive noise levels (exceeding a TWA of 85 dBA) on the job. If you compare the employee's annual audiogram to

Noise Monitoring

Conduct noise monitoring; include all employees affected by noise exceeding 85 dBA, TWA. Noise dosimetry is a method used to measure noise exposure. Not all employees need to be sampled; however, the noise monitoring must be representative of each affected employee's job. The monitoring should be designed to identify employees for inclusion in a Hearing Conservation Program. All employees must be notified of noise monitoring results that exceed 85 dBA, TWA.

Noise Controls

If noise levels exceed a TWA of 90 dBA, all feasible measures must be taken to reduce the noise exposure of employees to below 90 dBA. Whenever feasible engineering, administrative, or work-practice controls can be instituted, although insufficient to reduce exposure below the PEL, they shall be required in conjunction with personal protective equipment (PPE) to reduce exposure to the lowest practical level.

baseline audiogram. If the comparison shows a standard threshold shift, the employer must either accept

A Hearing Conservation Program

Must be implemented for all employees exposed to noise levels above a TWA of 85 dBA. These five basic components comprise an effective Hearing Conservation Program:

- Exposure Monitoring
- Audiometric Testing
- Hearing Protection
- Employee Training
- Recordkeeping

