

HEARING CONSERVATION

Background

The District will implement a hearing conservation program in accordance with WorkSafeBC regulations on noise.

Over time, noise from machinery, loud activity and equipment can cause permanent hearing loss. The purpose of this administrative procedure is to control noise exposure by implementing a hearing conservation program.

Procedures

1. Noise Measurement

- 1.1 When an employee may be exposed to potentially harmful levels of noise or noise above 82 dBA Lex, the District will measure noise exposure on equipment that meets Canadian Standards Association (CSA) specifications.
- 1.2 The District will record and keep noise measurements on file. Noise will not be measured if a noise control and hearing conservation program has been established for the employee.

2. Hearing Tests

- 2.1 The District will test the hearing of workers exposed to noise above the exposure limits as soon as practical during the first year of employment. Hearing will be tested annually thereafter.
- 2.2 An authorized examiner with WCB-approved equipment and procedural standards will test employees' hearing. The District will maintain a record of hearing tests for each worker in a file at the District Office.

3. Education and Training

- 3.1 The WCB acceptable level for noise exposure is between 82 and 85 dBA Lex. When an employee's daily exposure to noise is above this level, the District will inform the employee of the following:
 - 3.1.1 Results of the noise exposure measurement.
 - 3.1.2 Significance of the results to the risk of hearing loss.
 - 3.1.3 Purposes of the hearing testing program.
 - 3.1.4 Proper use and maintenance of hearing protection.
- 3.2 When an employee's daily exposure is below this level, the District will inform the employee of the following:
 - 3.2.1 Results of the noise exposure measurement.

- 3.2.2 Significance of the results to the risk of hearing loss.
- 3.2.3 If requested by the employee, the purposes of the hearing testing program.

4. Engineered Noise Control

- 4.1 When an employee is exposed to noise above 82 dBA Lex, the District will implement one or more options for engineered noise control to reduce worker exposure to or below the acceptable level.

5. Hearing Protection

- 5.1 When reducing noise levels to or below the exposure limits is not practical, the District will reduce the noise exposure to the lowest level practical and provide the affected employees with hearing protection that meets CSA specifications. The District will ensure that the employee understands and is directed to utilize hearing protection regularly and correctly.

6. Noise Hazard Areas

- 6.1 When reducing noise levels to or below the exposure limits is not practical, the District will post warning signs in any work area where the noise level exceeds WorkSafeBC standards. The District will supply all workers in the area with hearing protection. The employee is responsible for wearing hearing protection in all posted areas.

7. Program Review

- 7.1 The District will present a report to the District Health and Safety Committee each year on the effectiveness of the hearing conservation program.

Legal Reference: *Sections 22, 65, 85 School Act*
 Workers' Compensation Act
 WCB Regulations
 Canadian Standards Association Specifications