



OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY & HEALTH REPORT

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PLAINTIFF'S EXHIBIT

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OCCUPATIONAL NOISE STANDARDS

The Occupational Safety and Health Standards (29 CFR Part 1910) delineates in subpart G, 1910.95, the minimum standards on occupational noise exposure. The standard outlines, in brief, the maximum allowable exposure to noise, the requirement to initiate engineering and administrative controls to prevent over-exposure, and directs that an effective hearing conservation program be administered for those who are exposed to excessive noise.

To further elaborate on the requirements under the law, the Department of Labor (DOL) has recently published more specific Guidelines (attached) dealing with what it considers the minimum requirements for an industrial hearing conservation program to meet the dictates of the law. The following is a brief summary of those requirements:

PLANT NOISE SURVEY

A noise survey of the entire plant or facility must be done to identify those areas which exceed a level of 90 dBA. This survey can be done by "the insurance carrier, a consultant, a representative of a state health or labor department or by a qualified individual designated by the company." This survey should be preserved for record purposes and must be available for inspection by an OSHA Compliance Officer.

Those areas which exceed 90 dBA must be resurveyed at least annually and a record kept of the result for one year or until the next survey.

NOISE CONTROL MEASURES

Whenever a noise survey shows noise levels in excess of those listed in Table I of the enclosure, a detailed plan for controlling that noise including the projected completion dates for individual steps must be prepared. A listing of suggested engineering controls is contained on page 3 of the enclosure.

Where engineering controls fail to reduce the noise exposure to within permissible limits, administrative controls should be developed as outlined on page 4 of the enclosure.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

The use of personal protective equipment to reduce exposure to excessive noise levels is considered by DOL to be only an interim measure while engineering and administrative controls are being perfected. Where employees are exposed

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to noise levels greater than those indicated in Table I, personal protective equipment must be worn until effective noise controls are instituted.

AUDIOMETRY PROGRAM

Where employees are exposed even infrequently to noise levels in excess of 90 dBA, a hearing conservation program must be initiated. This will involve an audiometric test for all employees so exposed at least annually and more frequently if specified by the plant's regular or consulting physician. The records of such examinations shall be retained for 1 year following termination of employment or for 1 year from date of transfer to an area in which noise levels do not exceed 90 dBA.

If audiometric tests are done outside of the plant, the DOL has the right to inspect those testing facilities for compliance to the standard.

WHAT TO DO NOW

1. Insure that a noise survey has been done of the entire plant. If no survey has been made or if significant changes have been made in either equipment or the type of operation since the last survey, notify the Corporate Safety Office so that a survey can be scheduled through your insurance carrier, or call them directly for an appointment.
2. Review the latest noise survey conducted in the plant and identify those areas in which noise levels exceed 90 dBA. Thru your Engineering Department or an outside Noise Control Consultant, layout a specific plan to reduce noise levels to 90 dBA. The plan must include projected completion dates for each intervening step.
3. As an interim measure, institute administrative controls and require the use of approved personal protective equipment to insure that no employee is exposed to noise levels which exceed those in Table I.
4. Having identified those areas which exceed 90 dBA, determine which employees enter those areas even infrequently. These individuals, if not restricted from the designated areas, must be made part of a hearing conservation program and receive atleast annual audiometric examinations.
5. Evaluate the comparative economy of instituting an in-plant audiometry program or using an outside medical facility for this purpose. Keep in mind that all individuals exposed to noise levels exceeding 90 dBA must receive an annual audiometric exam.

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October 22, 1971

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