

 WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY	SAFETY_008	Revision Date: 11/29/16
	HEARING CONSERVATION	Approved by: Associate Vice President Strategy and Operations <hr/> Developed by: Environmental Health & Safety <i>Emily Reese</i> 11/29/16
Effective Date: November 1, 2001		

1. PURPOSE

The Hearing Conservation program is in place to prevent noise-induced hearing loss due to high decibel operations on campus. Wake Forest University will, when possible, prevent noise-induced hearing loss by providing proper engineering controls. When engineering controls are not feasible, appropriate hearing protection will be provided to employees. Adequate training and annual audiograms will be provided to affected employees.

Protection against the effects of noise exposure shall be provided when the sound levels exceed those referenced in 29 CFR 1910.95.

2. REFERENCE

29 CFR 1910.95

3. DEFINITIONS

Audiogram -the method of determining a person's threshold of hearing. The amount of hearing loss can be determined from an audiogram. The audiogram is typically the detection of a tone at its lowest perceivable level. The tones are at industry designated frequencies.

Audio Dosimeter – a device used to measure decibel levels instantaneously or over a set period of time.

Standard Threshold Shift - a standard threshold shift is a change in hearing threshold relative to the baseline audiogram of an average of 10 dB or more at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz in either ear.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)

The EHS Office is responsible for maintaining the hearing conservation program. The program will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Audio testing to check decibel levels at areas of concern on campus.

EHS will schedule annual audiograms for employees and annual audio dosimeter testing for affected employees as determined by Space Hazard Assessments and job specific tasks.

Maintain records of audiogram and audio dosimeter surveillance testing.

Supervisor / Department

In areas with high or constant noise risk, supervisors are responsible to maintain appropriate caution signs.

Supervisors will ensure that affected employees have been trained on occupational noise exposure and participate in annual audio dosimeter surveillance.

Provide training in the use and care of all hearing protectors provided to employees.

Ensure proper initial fitting and supervise the correct use of all hearing protectors.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring employees are using appropriate hearing protection when required.

Employee

Responsible for wearing assigned hearing protection. The type of hearing protection required is based on the level of noise exposure.

Participate in annual dosimeter testing as scheduled by EHS.

5. PROCEDURE

WFU shall administer a continuing, effective hearing conservation program whenever employee noise exposures equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA) sound level of 85 decibels.

5a. Audiogram and Dosimeter Testing

Employees who are assigned to a work area where there is a constant or high risk of noise exposure are required to take an initial audiogram (hearing test), which will be the baseline starting point. This includes, but may not be limited to employees in the following divisions:

- Landscaping and Athletics Turf Management
- Carpentry Shop
- Construction
- University Operations Center
- Real Estate Maintenance

- President's House Landscaping Staff
- Reynolda Gardens
- Athletic Maintenance
- Graylyn Landscaping Staff
- Graylyn Maintenance

All employees who work within these areas are required to have an annual audiogram as scheduled. A third party conducts the annual testing on campus. If the results from the test indicates hearing loss, the employee is notified and if recommended by medical examiner, may be referred for further medical evaluation.

5b. Hearing Protectors

Wake Forest University shall make hearing protectors available to all employees exposed to an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels or greater. Hearing protectors; such as ear muffs and plugs shall be replaced as necessary.

5b.1. Supervisors shall ensure that hearing protectors are worn:

When employees are subjected to sound exceeding those listed in the table below.

Duration per day, hours	Sound level dBA slow response
8	90
6	92
4	95
3	97
2	100
1 1/2	102
1	105
1/2	110
1/4 or less	115

By any employee who is exposed or has the potential for exposure to an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels or greater, shall be provided hearing protection and enrolled in the Hearing Protection Program.

At no time should an employee be exposed to impulsive or impact noise exceeding 140 dB peak sound pressure level.

6. TRAINING

Initial training shall ensure that each employee is informed of the following:

- The effects of noise on hearing
- The purpose of hearing protectors, the advantages, disadvantages, and attenuation of various types, and instructions on selection, fitting, use, and care
- The purpose of audiometric testing, and an explanation of the test procedures
- The training program shall be repeated annually for each employee included in the hearing conservation program. Information provided in the training program shall be updated to be consistent with changes in protective equipment and work processes

7. REVISIONS

REVISION	REVISION DATE
Updated employee category names.	11/28/2016
Revisions for Approval by AVP Strategy and Operations	10/24/2014
Deleted that employees will wear the audio testing device for 8 hours a day. EHS now contracts that service out to a third party to come on site and test all enrollees.	7/26/2013