

**STANDARD PRACTICE INSTRUCTION**

**DATE IMPLEMENTED:** 04 April 2019

**SUBJECT:** Noise Exposure

**REGULATORY STANDARD:** OSHA - 29 CFR 1910.95  
29 CFR 1926.52 & 101

**BASIS:** Approximately 16 million workers are exposed to excessive on-the-job noise levels on an annual basis. In addition to causing hearing loss by destroying the inner ear, noise can put stress on other parts of the body causing fatigue and unnecessary psychological stress. This preventable added burden to the body can result in increased injury rates. This poses a serious problem for exposed workers and their employer. The OSHA Occupational Noise Exposure Standard establishes uniform requirements to make sure that the noise hazards associated with all U.S. workplaces are evaluated, and that the hazards associated with high noise are transmitted to all affected workers so that mitigation measures can be instituted.

**GENERAL:** Nowland Associates, Inc. will ensure that the noise hazards within our facilities and jobsites, are evaluated, and that information concerning the hazards is transmitted to all employees. Appropriate hearing protection will be worn whenever levels listed in Table 2.2 are exceeded. Administrative controls will also be instituted, including job rotation on equipment posing noise hazards. Currently, no work areas present a noise level requiring the development of a Hearing Conservation Program. This standard practice instruction is intended to address comprehensively the issues of; evaluating the potential hazards of noise, communicating information concerning these hazards, and establishing appropriate protective measures for all employees.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** The company Safety Officer is solely responsible for all facets of this program and has full authority to make necessary decisions to ensure success of the program. The Safety Officer will develop written detailed instructions covering each of the basic elements in this program, and is the sole person authorized to amend these instructions. The company has expressly authorized the Safety Officer to halt any operation where there is danger of serious personal injury.

## **Contents of the Noise Exposure Policy**

- 1. Written Program Requirement.**
- 2. Noise Levels.**
- 3. Training.**

## Nowland Associates, Inc. Noise Exposure Program

**1. Written Program Development.** This policy will be reviewed on annual basis and updated as changes in company occur, or as changes are noted to 29 CFR 1910.95, 1926.52 & 101, which require revision of this document. When the criteria listed in the standards is met, then a written Hearing Conservation Program will be developed. Currently, there is no requirement for Nowland Associates, Inc. to meet this requirement. When and if a program is developed, it will be communicated to all personnel that are affected by it. It will encompass the total workplace, regardless of the number of workers employed or the number of work shifts. It will be designed to establish clear goals, and objectives.

### **2. Noise Levels.**

2.1 Nowland Associates, Inc. will establish and maintain an audiometric testing program free of charge for employees whose exposures equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels. Proper hearing protection will be provided at no cost to employees. Employees will be given the opportunity to select hearing protection devices. The employer shall evaluate hearing protection for the specific noise environments in which the protector will be used.

2.2 Nowland Associates, Inc. will provide protection against the effects of noise exposure when the sound levels within our work areas exceed those shown in Table 2.2, when measured on the A scale of a standard sound level meter at slow response.

**Table 2.1 PERMISSIBLE NOISE EXPOSURES**

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
0 1/2	110
1/4 or less	115

2.3 Exposure to impulsive or impact noise will not exceed 140 dB peak sound pressure level.

**3. Training Program.** This employer will institute a training program for all employees who are exposed to noise at or above an 8 hour time weighted average of 85 decibels, and will ensure employee participation in such program.

3.1 The training program will be provided before initial assignment and repeated annually for each employee included in the hearing conservation program. Training will be updated to be consistent with changes in the PPE and work processes that include instruction on the proper use and fitting of hearing protectors. Information provided in the training program will be updated to be consistent with changes in protective equipment and work processes. Each employee will be informed of the following:

3.1.1 The effects of noise on hearing.

3.1.2 The purpose of hearing protectors, the advantages, disadvantages, and attenuation of various types, and instructions on selection, fitting, use, and care.

3.1.3 The purpose of audiometric testing, and an explanation of the test procedures.

**3.2 Access to information and training materials.** This employer will make available to affected employees or their representatives copies of this standard practice instruction and 29 CFR 1910.95, and will also post a copy in the workplace.

3.2.1 This employer will provide to affected employees any informational materials pertaining to 29 CFR 1910.95 that are supplied by OSHA.

**3.3 Standard Threshold Shift.** Each employee's annual hearing test must be compared to the same employee's original baseline test. This is to see if a significant change, called a "standard threshold shift", has happened. If a standard threshold shift has happened, the employee who has had the standard threshold shift must be told in writing within 21 days of the test results coming out.

3.3.1 Unless a physician determines that the standard threshold shift is not work related or aggravated by occupational noise exposure, the employer shall ensure that employees already using hearing protectors shall be refitted and retrained in the use of hearing protectors and provided with hearing protectors offering greater attenuation if necessary. FThe employee shall be referred for a clinical audiological evaluation or an otological examination, as appropriate, if additional testing is necessary or if the employer suspects that a medical pathology of the ear is caused or aggravated by the wearing of hearing protectors.