

HEARING CONSERVATION PROGRAM

for

(Mine Name and MSHA I. D. Number)

Our Company policy is to provide a safe and healthful workplace environment for our miners and visitors. In order to strengthen this commitment, we have established this Hearing Conservation Program. The program applies to all persons, working in areas or with equipment, whose full-shift time-weighted average noise exposure equals or exceeds 85 decibels (in dBA), or equivalently a 50% dose. All departments affected will maintain a copy of this program.

A. Noise Monitoring

1. At the discretion of _____(responsible person), monitoring for noise exposure levels will be conducted. All monitoring will be conducted to assess full-shift exposures, using sound level meters or personal noise dosimeters. It is also the responsibility of the individual departments to notify this person when there is a possible need for monitoring.
2. Monitoring will also be conducted whenever there is a change in equipment, process, or controls that affects the noise levels. This includes the addition or removal of machinery, alteration in building structures, or substitution of new equipment in the work areas. The responsible supervisor to inform is _____(responsible person).
3. Affected miners and their representatives will be provided an opportunity to observe noise exposure monitoring and will be given prior notice of the date and time of the intended exposure monitoring.
4. Within 15 calendar days of the monitoring, the affected miners will be notified in writing of the exposure determination and the corrective action being taken.

B. Engineering and Administrative Controls

1. Our company's preferred method of hearing conservation is to control noise at its source through changes in machinery or equipment, changes in manual or mechanical materials handling, installing controls on vibrating surfaces, enclosing machinery, dampening with absorbents, insulating rooms, administrative controls, or other engineering controls. When noise exposures exceed 90 dBA (or equivalently a 100% dose), the work place noise levels will be reduced by a combination of engineering and administrative controls to the extent feasible.

2. When administrative controls are used, _____(responsible person) will post the procedures for such controls on the mine bulletin board and provide a copy to the affected miner.
3. No miner will be exposed to continuous noise levels exceeding 115 dBA.

C. Hearing Protection

1. Hearing protection and necessary replacements will be made available at no cost to miners performing tasks designated as having a high noise exposure. It is the responsibility of the department to offer hearing protection to miners whose full-shift time-weighted average noise exposure equals or exceeds 85 dBA (or equivalently a 50% dose). Hearing protection will be mandatory for those miners whose exposures exceed 90 dBA (or equivalently a 100% dose). Dual hearing protection will be mandatory for those miners whose exposures exceed 105 dBA (or equivalently an 800% dose).

Employees will have the opportunity to choose from at least two different types of earplugs and two different types of earmuffs. Personal stereo “walkman-type” headsets are not approved for hearing protection.

2. The areas or job tasks designated as requiring hearing protection are:

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____
- (5) _____

D. Employee Training

1. Affected miners will be required to receive training concerning the proper usage and wearing of hearing protection. The training will be conducted by _____(responsible person) or a designated representative, within a month of hire and annually thereafter. Training will include information on: the effects of noise on hearing; the purpose and value of wearing hearing protection; the various type of hearing protectors offered and their care, fitting and use; the general requirements of the standard; the mine operator’s and miner’s respective tasks in maintaining noise controls; the purpose and value of audiometric testing; and a summary of the procedure.

2. Training records with the date and type will be kept and certified by _____ (responsible person). [Note: Two sample certification forms are attached]. The most recent certification will be maintained for as long as the miner is enrolled in the hearing conservation program and for at least 6 months thereafter.

E. Audiograms (Hearing Tests)

1. Miners included in the hearing conservation program will be offered both a baseline and annual audiogram. If the miner chooses to participate in the audiometric testing program, these audiograms will be provided at no cost by _____ (audiometric testing company).
2. The baseline audiogram will be offered to the affected miner within six months of employment with this company. Annual audiograms will be performed within twelve months from the date of the previous audiogram. It is the responsibility of the _____ (responsible person) to schedule the audiograms and the responsibility of the miner to be on time for his/her tests.
3. If an annual audiogram shows that the miner has suffered a standard threshold shift, he/she may be re-tested within thirty (30) days of the original audiogram. If the retest confirms the occurrence of a standard threshold shift, the miner will be notified in writing within ten working days of the confirmation. Miners who do experience a standard threshold shift will also be refitted with hearing protection and provided more training on the effects of noise.

F. Noise Standards

1. A copy of the noise standard is attached with this program and is to be made available to any miners affected.