



Noise Level Monitoring

Executive Summary

It has been estimated that more than 30 million US workers are exposed to hazardous noise in the workplace. Occupational hearing loss continues to represent one of the most challenging and pervasive health and safety issues in the workplace. To help protect workers against noise induced hearing loss, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) established standard 1910.95, Noise and Hearing Conservation.

General Requirements for Noise and Sound Level Monitoring as Mandated by OSHA

- ❑ Initial monitoring is required when information indicates employee's exposure may equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average exposure of 85 decibels.
- ❑ A monitoring strategy should be implemented that helps identify exposed workers for inclusion in the Hearing Conservation Program and enables proper selection of hearing protectors.
- ❑ Where circumstances such as high worker mobility or significant variations in sound level make area monitoring generally inappropriate, the employer shall use representative personal sampling unless the employer can show that area sampling produces equivalent results.
- ❑ Monitoring should be repeated whenever a change in production, process, equipment or controls increases noise exposures to the extent that (1) additional employees may be exposed at or above the action level; or (2) the protection provided by hearing protectors may be rendered inadequate.

Objectives and Benefits of a Noise Monitoring Program

- ❑ To identify work tasks and work areas that require the use of hearing protection, and to ensure that the level of protection selected provides adequate protection.
- ❑ To identify employees for inclusion in the hearing conservation program.
- ❑ To identify opportunities for noise reduction.
- ❑ To evaluate the effectiveness of noise reduction initiatives.

CorpOHS' Approach

We use a combination of personal noise dosimetry and area sound level measurements to quantify noise exposures and identify exposed employees for inclusion in the hearing conservation program. Where applicable, we offer suggestions for reducing noise levels through engineering and work practice controls. We prefer to use personal noise dosimetry for exposure assessment, as this more accurately reflects daily fluctuations in noise exposure. Assessments will be conducted by a Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH) using instrumentation that meets OSHA specifications.

Additional Noise-Related Services Available from CorpOHS:

- ❑ Development of written hearing conservation programs.
- ❑ Customized hearing conservation training.
- ❑ Audiometric testing.