

Operational Policy

Policy Title:	Applies to:		Reference #
Hearing Conservation Policy	All Employees		113-HR-15
Approved by:	Dates:		Total # of Pages
Executive Leadership Team	Effective:	13-Nov-1990	5
	Last Review:	01-Apr- 2015	
	Next Review:	01-Apr- 2018	
Authority:			
People and Organizational Culture			

1.0 Purpose

To comply with the Noise Control and Hearing Conservation Regulations as identified in Sections 109 – 114, and Sections 86, 87 and 99 of the *Provincial Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996*.

2.0 Scope

All employees of the City of Regina.

3.0 Definitions dBA: The sound pressure level present in decibels measured on the A scale of a sound level meter. **dBA L_{ex}** :The level of a worker’s total exposure to noise, in dBA, averaged over an entire workday and adjusted to an equivalent eight-hour exposure.

Hearing Protection is Required: In workplaces having a noise level equal to or greater than 85 dBA.

4.0 Policy

All employees who perform work, supervise or manage in a workplace where the noise level is greater than 85 dBA shall adhere to the City of Regina *Hearing Conservation Program*.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

Workplace Health and Safety Branch, People and Organizational Culture

The Workplace Health and Safety Representative is responsible for developing, revising and promote corporate awareness of the City of Regina’s, *Hearing Conservation Program*.

Specific Responsibilities

- Ensure that changes to the Provincial OH&S Regulations concerning Noise Control and Hearing Conservation are made available to all applicable workplaces and Occupational Health and Safety Committees
- Review documentation provided from the audiometric testing service provider to assess potential changes in the workplace that is affecting the worker's hearing health. All audiometric testing records will be treated as confidential medical records
- Promote and ensure that management enforces the City of Regina, *Hearing Conservation Program*
- Ensure management and supervisory staff is fully aware of their responsibilities concerning the City of Regina *Hearing Conservation Program*
- Provide assistance to supervisors in the identification of work areas, work processes or equipment where noise levels are equal to or exceed 85 dBA. Ensure signage that is posted warning of noise exposure indicates the actual noise levels in dBA
- Provide assistance to supervisors in the identification of personnel who are subjected to noise levels equal to or exceeding 85 dBA Lex or 90 dBA
- Ensure "Sound Level Meters" are maintained and calibrated in accordance with the manufacturer recommendations
- Review and, when necessary, revise the *Hearing Conservation Program* every three years (OHS Regulations Section 114)
- Review the *Request for Proposal* requirements to ensure the audiologist will be in compliance with the guidelines published in *Audiometric Testing in Saskatchewan*
- Review the audiologists' performance in testing for hearing loss and maintaining the required documentation as per the guidelines within the publication *Audiometric Testing in Saskatchewan*
- Assist supervisory personnel when requested with the investigation where standard threshold shifts have been reported by the audiologist

Department

It is the responsibility of the Manager to ensure that the worker has been informed of the hazards of noise exposure when the noise exposure is believed to be between 80 dBA and 85 dBA. If the worker does request hearing protection, it shall be provided and meet the requirements of Provincial OH&S Regulation, Section 99.

It is the responsibility of the manager to ensure that all employees exposed to noise levels equal to or greater than 85 dBA L_{ex} or 90 dBA have access to appropriate hearing protective devices.

The Manager or their designate will be responsible to schedule those employees who are or may be exposed to noise greater than 85 dBA into the City of Regina, *Audiometric Testing Program*. New hires or employees who have transferred into the department who have not already participated in this program shall have a baseline audiometric test performed within a month of reporting to their new place of employment. Employees who are in the audiometric testing program will be tested within 24 months after the baseline test to comply with Provincial OH&S Regulations.

Management is responsible for engineering and administrative controls in designated hazardous noise areas. In the event these measures are not effective in eliminating excessive noise they will ensure the appropriate hearing protection is worn while the noise is present.

Department Responsibilities

- Employees will be trained in the hazards of exposure to noise in the workplace. Training shall include information from the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour's publication "*Noise in the Workplace*".
- Ensure all new workers receive training during their orientation on the hazards of excessive noise exposure.
- Ensure that a copy of Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour's, *Noise in the Workplace* is present on the OH&S Bulletin Board.
- Modify work areas or equipment to reduce potentially hazardous noise wherever it is technologically and economically feasible.
- Working with the Workplace Health and Safety Representative to identify work areas and equipment within their respective departments where noise levels equal or exceed 85 dBA during a continuous 8-hour period.
- Post signs at the entrance(s) to all work areas where noise levels equal or exceed 85 dBA. Signage must indicate the actual noise level range in dBA within the work area.
- Post signage on all stationary equipment and powered mobile equipment where the noise level are equal to or exceed 85 dBA. Signage must indicate the actual noise level range in dBA that is emitted from the machine or equipment.
- Enforce the use of hearing protection in posted areas.
- Work environments will be inspected and monitored to identify potentially hazardous noise levels and personal risk
- Perform Site Inspections, it is required that hearing protection be included on any Site Inspection check list where applicable. Corrective discipline shall be enforced in the event of non-compliance.
- Supply appropriate hearing protection to employees at no cost to the employee. Employee may have the choice of either a muff or plug type of hearing protection. Unless it is deemed by a risk assessment that both types of hearing protection is required for adequate protection.
- Hearing protection provided will reduce the noise level entering the ear to 85 dBA or less unless this is not physically possible.
- Ensure hearing protection devices are used and maintained as originally intended and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

- Provide training for employees on the proper use of hearing protection devices, this will include periodic refresher training during Safety Meetings.
- Schedule audiometric testing for all new employees and employees exposed to noise greater than 85 dBA. The Workplace Health and Safety Representative can provide the name of the current Audiologist under contract with the City of Regina.
- Ensure that employees enrolled in the *Audiometric Testing Program* are tested at least once every 24 months.
- Conduct investigations where standard threshold shifts among employees have been reported by the Audiologist.
- As per the professional services agreement, each department will pay for the audiometric test and related counselling as per the current service agreement.

Employees

Employees are responsible to inspect, maintain and use hearing protective devices as provided by the City of Regina. Employees must participate in baseline and periodic audiometric testing, training offerings and safety talks on hearing conservation subjects as per the *Hearing Conservation Policy*.

Service Provider Saskatchewan Registered Audiologist

The audiologist must be registered to practice in the Province of Saskatchewan. The audiologist is responsible to work with the manager or their designate to schedule, conduct hearing tests, and counseling services for all employees participating in the City of Regina, *Hearing Conservation Program*.

Testing and counseling will consist of the standards stated within the *Audiometric Testing in Saskatchewan* publication, published by Saskatchewan Ministry of Advanced Education, Education and Labour.

The audiologist is responsible to notify the Manager of Workplace Health and Safety or their designate of all employees who have experienced significant changes in hearing (standard threshold shifts) in order that follow-up investigations may be conducted. The affected employee and his or her manager will also be notified.

7.0 Related Forms

Employee Reimbursement Request Form
Workplace Injury Report Form

8.0 Reference Material

The Saskatchewan Employment Act
The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 1996
Audiometric Testing in Saskatchewan
Noise in the Workplace
Personal Protective Equipment Policy

9.0 Revision History

Date	Description of Change	(Re)Approval Required (y/n)
13-Nov-1990	Initial Release.	Yes
01-Oct-2011	Review	Yes
01-Jun-2012	Review	Yes
01-Apr -2015	Review	Yes