



Outsource Utility Contractor Corp.  
Hearing Conservation Program

August 2015

# Hearing Conservation

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## Introduction

### *Outsource UCC's commitment to hearing conservation*

As part of Outsource Utility Contractor Corp's commitment to ensure the health and safety of our employees, this program is intended to protect against work-related noise-induced hearing loss.

### *Regulations*

Outsource UCC is required under Title 8, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Article 105, Control of Noise Exposure, Sections 5095 through 5100 and Title 29 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1910.95, Occupational Noise Exposure, to establish, implement, and maintain an effective HCP when employees' exposures are 85 dBA for an 8-hour time-weighted average for General Industry activities.

Within California for construction activities, under Title 8 CCR Article 3, Section 1521, Ear Protection, Outsource UCC is required to establish hearing protection requirements for construction work when employee exposures are 90 dBA for an 8-hour time-weighted average.

### *Applicability*

The HCP applies to all Outsource organizations (business units, organizations, sites/locations, facilities, and activities) and covers all employees who are exposed to noise levels of 85 decibels or above as measured on the A-weighted scale (dBA) for a time-weighted average (TWA) of 8-hours for general industry-related work activity.

For construction activities conducted in California, Outsource UCC has the option of applying the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) Construction Hearing Protection Standard (Title 8 CCR Article 3, Section 1521 Ear Protection) or the General Industry Standard (Title 8, CCR, Article 105, Control of Noise Exposure, Sections 5095 through 5100).

Special provisions will apply to any employee conducting construction activities in Nevada or outside of California who is exposed to noise at or above an 8-hour TWA of 90 dBA or equivalent. If such conditions exist, Corporate Safety must be contacted.

## Responsibilities

Outsource UCC **Safety Management Team** is responsible for performing the following tasks:

- Reviews and approves all HCP training materials used at Outsource.
- Reviews and approves local hearing conservation implementation plans/processes.

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- Evaluates changes to applicable regulations to ensure that required changes to the HCP are identified, implemented, and monitored for compliance with Federal, state, and local regulations.
- Assists outside organizations, individual facilities, and their HCPA to implement the HCP and local implementation plans/processes as requested.
- Approves personal hearing protection and maintains a list of approved devices and SAP/material codes for recordkeeping.
- Prequalifies HCPAs, contractors, or other persons who provide hearing protection or acoustical engineering consulting or management services/activities including outside contractors and local HCPAs by reviewing qualifications and experience to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform the designated tasks.
- Maintains employee noise exposure records.
- Conducts or arranges for qualified persons to conduct employee noise exposure assessments as requested.
- Conducts an investigation of Standard Threshold Shifts (STSs) and all Cal/OSHA or OSHA recordable and Workers' Compensation hearing losses. Submits reports to Workers' Compensation, the local organization, and Corporate Medical Services. Maintains reports as specified under Outsource guidelines and regulatory requirements.
- Maintains Outsource UCC's OSHA 300 log as required for confirmed OSHA recordable hearing losses.

## Workers' Compensation

**Note:** Workers' Compensation is concerned with hearing losses that reach the level of a loss as defined by State Workers' Compensation laws.

- Selects or approves an audiologist or qualified physician to render a qualified opinion of a compensation claim.
- Determines work-relatedness for workers' compensation purposes.

## Outsource Organization Management

- Provides visible leadership within the organization by consistently promoting safety compliance while focusing on prevention.
- Serves as or designates individuals to serve as the organization's HCPA.
- Ensures that assessments are conducted to identify high noise areas.
- Ensures that hearing conservation mitigation measures including feasible engineering controls, administrative controls, and hearing protection are defined and implemented in their area of responsibility (AOR).

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## HCPA

- Ensures that an Outsource UCC or location-specific HCP implementation process is developed and implemented as approved by the HCPM. In the alternative, the Corporate HCP may be used as the implementation process.
- Ensures that for California facilities a copy of the Cal/OSHA Title 8 CCR Article 105, Control of Noise Exposure, is available to the employees or their representatives and shall ensure that a copy is posted in the work place when required.
- Ensures that for facilities outside of California that a copy of Federal OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.95, Occupational Noise Exposure, is available to the employees or their representatives and shall ensure that a copy is posted in the work place when required.
- Assesses the effectiveness of the HCP at least annually.
- Ensures that the employee and similarly affected employees are notified in writing of monitoring results. Notifications will typically be issued by the HCPM. In any case, the HCPM will be provided a copy of all monitoring results.
- Ensures that employees receive initial, annual, and exit audiometric testing.
- Ensures that employee HCP training is conducted initially and annually.
- Maintains or ensures that documentation of such training is maintained in accordance with company policies.
- Ensures or establishes mechanisms or processes that ensure employees scheduled for audiograms are notified that they must avoid high noise exposures for at least 14 hours prior to the testing.
- Maintains a current HCP participant list and provides the list to the HCPM on or before June 1 and December 1 of each year.
- Works with the HCPM to ensure that an accurate database of Hearing Conservation Program participants for their AOR is maintained.
- Ensures that approved hearing protection devices are readily available.
- Conducts an investigation in conjunction with the HCPM of all reported standard threshold shifts.
- Ensures that when notified that employees with hearing impairments who are required to use hearing protection are referred to Corporate Medical Services for evaluation.
- Develops and implements a plan in conjunction with the HCPM to evaluate workplaces in their AOR to identify high noise areas and/or worker noise exposures.
- Completes with the HCPM an annual assessment of the effectiveness of the Outsource UCC or location-specific HCP implementation plan/ process.

## Qualified Person

Performs specific tasks related to this program.

**Note:** A qualified person is a person(s) such as an acoustical engineer, industrial hygienist, or qualified company who by reason of experience or instruction have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform an assigned task correctly. The HCPA or HCPM identifies such persons to

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perform specific tasks related to this program. The HCPM confirms that the person has the necessary skills and knowledge to perform the tasks.

## Site Safety Manager

- Ensures that if hearing protection or a HCP is required in their AOR that a written local hearing conservation implementation process is developed and implemented in accordance with the requirements of this program.
- Ensures that the provisions of the local hearing conservation program are implemented and enforced in their AOR.
- Ensures that Cal/OSHA or Federal OSHA noise and hearing conservation regulation is posted in the work places as required and is available to the employees or their representatives.
- Ensures that potential and identified high noise areas are properly evaluated and signed in their AOR.
- Ensures that hearing protection is provided and properly worn in their AOR.
- Ensures that employees in their AOR are enrolled in the HCP as required.
- Ensures that a written Outsource UCC hearing conservation implementation process is developed and implemented.
- Ensures that employees enrolled in the HCP or who are required to wear hearing protection receive appropriate training.

## Affected Employee

- Participates in HCP training.
- Maintains awareness of any noise hazards in their work area.
- Reports high noise areas or activities that generate high noise levels to their supervisor.
- Cooperates with persons conducting noise exposure evaluations including wearing personal dosimeters, if requested.
- Wears hearing protection as instructed and when required.
- Reports any problems with the use of hearing protection devices to their supervisor.
- Participates in the audiometric testing program including taking initial, annual, and exit audiograms.
- Completes questionnaires.
- Avoids exposure to high noise for at least 14-hours prior to audiometric testing.
- Notifies the audiometric tester of exposure to high noise within the 14-hour period prior to the test and of any physical issues, medical conditions, or illnesses such as colds, flu, sinus infections, or allergic responses that might interfere with audiometric testing or provide erroneous results.
- Immediately reports any STS to their supervisor.

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## Hearing Conservation Program

### *Program elements*

The eight elements of Outsource UCC's Corporate Hearing Conservation Program are:

1. Initial exposure assessment
2. Exposure monitoring and assessment
3. Engineering and administrative controls
4. Hearing protection
5. Audiometric testing
6. Training and education
7. Recordkeeping
8. Program evaluation

**Note:** HCPM and Safety staff provide technical assistance to the HCPA in completing the tasks associated with this HCP or local implementation process.

### **1. Initial Exposure Assessment**

**Note:** Noise monitoring may be initiated based on a Supervisor, SES, or HCPA review to identify high noise areas or when any information indicates that employees may be exposed to excessive noise or an employee requests monitoring of noise levels in the workplace.

#### *Supervisor, SES and HCPA*

- The Supervisor, SES, or HCPA conduct a review of the work area to identify high noise areas.
- The Supervisor, SES, or HCPA requests assistance from the HCPM to conduct sound level screening and employee exposure evaluations.

#### *Employee may initiate noise monitoring*

- If an employee expresses concern about noise levels, the HCPA conducts the noise evaluation, contacts a qualified person, or contacts the HCPM to request a noise evaluation of the workplace.

#### *HCPM*

The HCPM:

- Evaluates the need to perform noise monitoring.
- If needed, ensures that noise monitoring is performed in accordance with applicable regulations and professional standards by qualified personnel.

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**Note:** Employees or their representatives shall have the opportunity to observe any measurements of employees' noise exposure.

- Ensures that the results are evaluated and a monitoring report is developed.
- Ensures that the HCPA is notified of the monitoring results in writing.

**Note:** The HCPA is responsible for ensuring that that affected employees are notified of monitoring results.

## *Monitoring report*

Qualified persons evaluate the monitoring results and make recommendations in a monitoring report. If noise levels are **at or above** the action level (AL) qualified persons:

- As applicable, recommend changes to operations, feasible engineering controls, and administrative controls so that if noise levels will be below the AL (this will require follow-up testing to confirm lowered noise levels), or
- Identify occupations and employees who must participate in the HCP.
- Forward the monitoring report to the HCPA and HCPM for review.

## *Employees Notified*

- The HCPA ensures that affected employees are notified in writing of their exposure monitoring results.

## *Verify notification*

- The HCPM verifies that affected employees were notified in writing of their exposure monitoring results

## **2. Exposure Monitoring and Assessment**

### *Monitoring*

Monitoring of employees for noise exposure is typically composed of two parts: area and personal monitoring. Area measurements are generally conducted first to evaluate the need for employee exposure monitoring. If noise levels are at or above 85 dBA, personal monitoring using dosimeters is typically performed.

### *Assessment*

The HCPM and HCPA ensure that appropriate types of monitoring and assessments are performed to identify areas, tasks, and job assignments at work locations where sound is at or above the AL.

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The person conducting the monitoring shall provide affected employees or their representatives with an opportunity to observe any measurements of employees' noise exposure.

Qualified person assess monitoring results.

## *Results below Action Level*

If monitoring results show that noise levels are **below** the AL, the HCPA:

- Ensures that the appropriate employees receive an exit audiogram per Section 3.5.
- Removes the employees from their list of employees in the HCP.
- Informs HCPM to remove employees from the Corporate-maintained HCP database.

## *Results at or above Action Level*

If monitoring results show that the noise levels are at or **above** the AL for General Industry activities the HCPA:

- Informs the appropriate employees of the results.
- Ensures that employees are enrolled in the HCP as appropriate. See Criteria for Placing Employees in the HCP, later in this section.
- Ensures that signs are posted in high noise, fixed work areas. For work in the field, information will be provided in annual training.
- Ensures, when notified, that employees who have hearing impairments and are required to use hearing protection are referred to Corporate Medical Services for evaluation.

Employees exposed to noise at or above the AL wear appropriate hearing protection.

Supervisors enforce the use of hearing protection where needed.

Working with HCPM/EH&S staff, the HCPA:

- As needed, establishes a schedule for performing additional monitoring and assessments in areas where noise levels equal or exceed the AL.
- Performs additional monitoring and assessments when a change in production process, equipment, or controls increases or decreases the noise exposure such that additional employees are exposed to noise levels or employees already in the HCP are exposed to different noise levels.

## *Results at or above permissible noise exposure level (PNE)*

The HCPA works with the HCPM and Outsource UCC management to identify feasible engineering and administrative controls. In the interim or if engineering and administrative controls are not feasible, implements an effective HCP.

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For construction-related activities, the HCPA provides approved hearing protection and trains employees in the proper fit and use of hearing protection except for employees working outside of California.

The HCPM works with Outsource UCC management to implement feasible engineering and administrative controls.

## *Criteria for Placing Employees in the HCP*

- Employees shall be included in the HCP based on specific job activities versus job classifications. Exceptions can be made to this with the concurrence of the HCPM.
- Employees conducting activities that are deemed to be General Industry-related shall be placed in the HCP whenever their work-shift noise exposure is at or above the AL of 85 dBA for an 8-hour TWA.
- The HCPA may with the concurrence of the Outsource UCC management and the HCPM exclude those employees from being enrolled in the HCP whose work activities are deemed to be strictly construction-related activities except for employees working outside of California.
- Employees in California whose work activities are deemed to be strictly construction activities and who are exposed to an 8-hour TWA of 90 dBA shall be provided with and trained in the use of hearing protection.
- Employees working outside of California and whose work activities are deemed to be strictly construction-related per Federal OSHA regulations shall be included in the HCP whenever their noise exposure is at or above 90 dBA for an 8-hour TWA.

## **3. Engineering and Administrative Controls**

Engineering and administrative controls should be considered when monitoring shows that employees exposed to noise at or above the AL. If employees exposure equals or exceeds an 8-hour TWA sound level of 90 dBA (slow response), feasible engineering and administrative controls shall be used to reduce the sound level below this PNE. Hearing protection shall be required until sound levels can be reduced to below the PNE or whenever engineering controls are ineffective in reducing sound levels to below the PNE.

### *Engineering Controls*

The use of engineering controls is the primary means of reducing or eliminating personnel exposure to hazardous noise. Engineering controls are defined as any modification or replacement of equipment, or related physical change at the noise source or along the transmission path, that reduces the noise level or the employee's exposure to noise.

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## *Administrative Controls*

Administrative controls are defined as changes in the work schedule or operations that reduce noise exposure.

## *Process*

1. When monitoring results show that employees are exposed to sound levels at or above the AL and/or PNE level, an engineering feasibility study should be conducted or sponsored by the location to identify engineering controls to reduce sound levels and/or administrative controls to reduce noise exposure.
2. The HCPA ensures that exposure monitoring and assessments are performed per Section 3.2 after controls are in place.

## **4. Hearing Protection**

As discussed in Section 3.2, hearing protection devices are required for employees exposed at or above the action level (85 dBA 8-hour TWA for General Industry activities or 90 dBA for a TWA of 8-hours for construction-related activities).

- Working with HCPM/EH&S staff, the HCPA ensures that employees are able to select the appropriate hearing protection device from those approved by the HCPM. An approved hearing protection device list is maintained by the HCPM at Outsource UCC headquarters.
- Approved hearing protection devices used must attenuate employee exposures to an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels or below.
- Insertable hearing protection devices should have a minimum Noise Reduction Rating (NRR) of 30 dB.
- Earmuff style hearing protection devices should have a minimum NRR of 26 dB.

**Note:** Exceptions can be made due to special circumstances with agreement by the HCPM. In all cases, the hearing protection devices must attenuate employee exposures to 85 decibels or below.

*Hearing protection is required to be worn when sound levels are at or above 85 dBA for an 8-hour TWA.*

HCPA/SES/Supervisors:

- Ensure that employees are properly trained and fitted with Outsource-approved hearing protection devices.
- Enforce the proper use of hearing protection devices.

When required, employees shall:

- Properly wear the appropriate hearing protection devices.
- Maintain and properly care for hearing protection devices.
- Replace hearing protection devices as needed.

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## 5. Audiometric Testing

### *Safety Management:*

- Ensures that all approved vendors or medical providers who perform audiometric tests are currently certified by the Council for Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation.
- Maintains all audiometric test records.
- Develops, provides, or approves medical providers/vendors' audiometric test procedures including instrument calibration, daily calibration checks, questionnaires, and pre-and-post test procedures.
- Verifies with the assistance of the HCPM that medical providers/vendors comply with established procedures by conducting an annual assessment.
- Notifies or has the medical provider/vendor notify the employee, HCPM, Workers' Compensation, and supervisor whenever a potential STS, confirmed STS, or OSHA recordable, or workers' compensable hearing loss is identified.

### *Baseline testing*

**Note:** Baseline audiometric testing should be conducted as soon as possible. It must be conducted no later than 6 months from an employee's exposure to noise at or above the AL as defined by regulation.

### The HCPA:

- Ensures that a baseline audiogram is obtained for employees (new, rehires, and transfers from a non-exposure job) included in the HCP.
- Notifies employees of the need to avoid high levels of non-occupational and occupational noise exposure during the 14-hour period immediately preceding any audiometric testing.
- Ensures that employees are provided sufficient time to attend initial and follow-up audiometric tests and/or evaluations.

### *Annual and exit audiometric testing*

**Note:** Audiometric testing is a valuable tool to understand if the HCP is effective, to identify potential high noise activities or locations, to proactively address issues before a recordable hearing loss is experienced, and to prevent further reduction in hearing. An STS is an indicator of a potential issue with any of the above or may be an indicator of a personal medical problem.

Both baseline and annual audiometric testing must be conducted after a 14-hour quiet period to be able to effectively compare results.

### *Annual and exit audiometric testing*

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The HCPA ensures that all employees in the HCP receive an annual audiometric test while in the program and when they exit the program (based on Corporate Medical Services determination).

The HCPA and supervisor ensures that an exit audiogram is requested for an employee who is enrolled in the HCP and who is scheduled for an extended military deployment and ensures that an audiogram is requested for them upon their return.

## Potential STS Is Identified

If results of audiometric testing indicate that a potential STS is identified, the vendor:

- Immediately informs the employee of the results.
- Conducts an interview with the employee to assist in the determination of work-relatedness. The interview will include questions of current medical conditions that could impact test results; work conditions; loud work-related equipment, activities or operations; historical work-related noises including single, loud noise events; hobbies; and outside-of-work activities that create or have created high noise levels.

If the STS is potentially caused by work-related activities or aggravated by work-related activities the medical provider/vendor or the HCPA shall:

- Fit the employees who were not wearing hearing protectors with hearing protectors, train them in their use and care, and encourage them to use hearing protectors while working.
- Refit employees who were using hearing protectors, retrain them in the use and care of hearing protectors, and, if necessary, offer hearing protectors with greater attenuation.

If the STS is not believed to be caused by a medical condition, the vendor or HCPA shall:

- Fit the employees who were not wearing hearing protectors with hearing protectors, train them in their use and care, and encourage them to use hearing protectors while working.
- Refit employees who were using hearing protectors, retrain them in the use and care of hearing protectors, and, if necessary, offer hearing protectors with greater attenuation.

The employee informs the supervisor of the results.

The supervisor informs the HCPA of the potential STS.

The medical provider/vendor informs Outsource UCC of test results within one-business day of the audiometric test results.

Outsource Management contacts the employee, supervisor, and HCPM of the potential STS within three business days.

The HCPM contacts the HCPA of the potential STS within three business days. The HCPA and the HCPM determine further actions based on historical or employee exposure monitoring data.

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Working with Outsource Management, the supervisor and the HCPA ensure that the employee is scheduled for a retest within 30 days of the date of the original audiometric test.

When informed that an employee has a potential STS shift, the Supervisor ensures that the appropriate injury and illnesses forms are completed in accordance with the Reporting Injuries and Illnesses at Work Program. See References.

**Note:** If an employee with an *unconfirmed STS* has not had a retest and is more than 30 days from the original test, the STS is assumed to be a confirmed STS.

## *HCPM & HCPA*

The HCPA and/or the HCPM conducts an evaluation of the STS that may include, but is not limited, to an exposure data review, employee interviews, employee exposure evaluation, or a worksite evaluation. Such information will be provided to Company Insurance and Workers' Compensation as requested.

## **Confirmed STS Is Identified**

- If a confirmed STS is identified, the vendor notifies Company Insurance within one-business day.
- Company Insurance notifies the affected employee, Workers' Compensation, the employee's supervisor, and the HCPM within three business days.
- The HCPM contacts the HCPA of the STS within three business days. The HCPA and the HCPM determine further actions based on historical or employee exposure monitoring data.
- Unless a physician determines that a confirmed STS is not work related or aggravated by occupational noise exposure, the HCPA shall ensure that Section 3.5.4 is followed when an STS occurs.
- When informed that an employee has an STS shift, the Supervisor completes appropriate injury and illnesses forms in accordance with the Reporting Injuries and Illnesses at Work Program. See References.

**Note:** If any *unconfirmed STS* has not had a retest and is more than 30 days from the original test, the STS is assumed to be a confirmed STS

## **Confirmed STS Follow-up**

Unless a physician determines that a confirmed STS is not work related or aggravated by occupational noise exposure, the HCPA shall ensure that the following steps have been taken when a STS occurs:

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- If the employee was not using hearing protectors, the employee shall be fitted with hearing protectors, trained in their use and care, and required to use the hearing protectors while working in areas at or above the AL.
- If the employee was using hearing protectors, the employee shall be refitted and retrained in the use and care of hearing protectors and, if necessary, offered hearing protectors with greater attenuation.
- Regardless of whether the STS is work-related or not, the employee shall be instructed in the proper use of hearing protection, properly fitted with the appropriate hearing protection, encouraged to use hearing protection whenever the employee feels they are in a high noise area or conducting noisy activities, and required to use hearing protection whenever they are in a high noise area or conducting noisy activities.

## *HCPM & HCPA*

The HCPA and/or the HCPM conducts an evaluation of the confirmed STS, OSHA recordable loss, or Workers' Compensation loss that may include, but is not limited to, an exposure data review, employee interviews, employee exposure evaluation, or a worksite evaluation. Such information will be provided to Company Insurance and Workers' Compensation as requested.

## *Confirmed STS, OSHA Recordable Illness, Workers' Compensation Claim*

If a hearing loss meets the definition of an OSHA recordable hearing loss, the vendor shall notify Workers' Compensation and Company Insurance who shall in turn notify the HCPM.

If an STS rises to an OSHA recordable or Workers' Compensation claim level, Workers' Compensation representative shall notify the HCPM to conduct an investigation or request information concerning the specific employee's exposures and work conditions or those working in that job classification. The HCPM may conduct an evaluation that may include sound level measurements, employee exposure assessment, and work history. The HCPM shall coordinate with Workers' Compensation on information and schedule.

Workers' Compensation receives the HCPM employee exposure assessment from the HCPM and provides this information to the attending physician to assist in all evaluations of work-relatedness.

Workers' Compensation arranges for a licensed physician to provide a qualified opinion to determine whether a potential or confirmed STS is caused, contributed to, or significantly aggravated by occupational noise.

The medical opinion will be based on the following testing and information:

- Minimum testing of air/conduction, bone/conduction, and speech
- Employee work history
- Noise exposure data
- Medical conditions
- Non-occupational noise exposure

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- Employee interview and questionnaire

The physician will provide Workers' Compensation with a written medical opinion as to whether the hearing loss was caused, contributed to, or significantly aggravated by the work environment and include an explanation of the information relied upon as the basis of the opinion.

## 6. Training and Education

HCPM:

- Identifies HCP training requirements.
- Communicates the HCP learning objectives to HCPAs.
- Approves the HCP training material.

The HCPA:

- Ensures that the appropriate HCP training is developed, updated, conducted, and documented.
- Submits the HCP training material to the HCPM for review and approval.
- Ensures that for California facilities a copy of the Cal/OSHA Title 8 CCR Article 105, Control of Noise Exposure, is available to the employees or their representatives and shall ensure that a copy is posted in the work place when required.
- Ensures that for facilities outside of California that a copy of Federal OSHA standard 29 CFR 1910.95, Occupational Noise Exposure, is available to the employees or their representatives and shall ensure that a copy is posted in the work place when required. .
- Updates information provided in the training program to ensure that it is consistent with current Outsource UCC practices and programs, regulations, work processes, and equipment used in the workplace.

### *Frequency*

HCP training shall be offered when an employee enters the program and annually for as long as the employee is in the HCP.

### *Required HCP training topics*

Required HCP training topics are:

- Effect of noise on hearing
- Purpose of hearing protectors; advantages, disadvantages, and attenuation of various types; and instructions on selection, fitting, use, and care
- Purpose of audiometric testing and an explanation of testing procedures
- Sources and effect of non-occupational noise exposure

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- Availability of Outsource-supplied hearing protection devices for non-occupational noise exposure
- HCP requirements
- Applicable regulations

## 7. Recordkeeping

All records required by this program shall be provided upon request to Workers' Compensation, employees (limited to applicable exposure and audiometric testing records), former employees (limited to applicable exposure and audiometric testing records), representatives designated by an individual employee, and any authorized representative of an appropriate regulatory agency.

### *Exposure records*

HCPM maintains all noise exposure measurement records for a minimum of 2 years.

### *Audiometric testing*

Company Insurance maintains audiometric testing records for the duration of employment of the affected employee that include the following information:

- Name and job classification of the tested employee
- Date of the audiogram
- Examiner's name
- Date of last acoustic or exhaustive calibration of the audiometer
- Employee's most recent noise exposure assessment

### *Employees in the HCP*

HCPM maintains a database of all employees in the HCP.

The HCPA maintains a copy of the written notification to employees in affected job classifications when exposure monitoring indicates exposures at or above the AL for General Industry activities. This record shall be kept for 2 years.

### *OSHA Log*

Outsource Safety maintains the organizations' OSHA 300 Logs related to OSHA-recordable hearing losses.

### *STS*

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Workers' Compensation maintains records of suspect and confirmed STSs.

## *Training records*

The HCPA documents all HCP training by attendance records and/or entry into the training record database.

## **8. Program Evaluation**

Program performance tracking is accomplished through three mechanisms: semi-annual review of HCP testing records, annual program review, and Outsource UCC's annual program review.

### *Semi-annual review of HCP records*

Each HCPA shall provide the HCPM a list of employees who are currently enrolled in the HCP at least on a semi-annual basis and as requested. The Corporate Medical Services Department shall provide the HCPM a list of employees who have received an initial and annual audiogram at a minimum of semi-annually and as requested. Lists shall be provided on or before June 1<sup>st</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup> annually.

The HCPM shall compare the two lists and testing dates for employees. If there are discrepancies and employees have not received audiograms as specified in this program or by regulation, the HCPM shall notify the HCPA of such discrepancies and request employees be tested as needed to meet program or regulatory requirements.

### *Annual program review*

The Corporate Safety Manager and the HCPM conduct an annual review of the Corporate HCP. This will include an assessment of any new requirements and identify opportunities for improvements to the implementation of the program.

On an annual basis, the HCPM shall conduct a review of Outsource's hearing conservation implementation process with each HCPA. The review will include a review of employees enrolled in the program versus audiometric testing, effectiveness of hearing protection, and a comparison of activities versus the Outsource UCC implementation process.

## **Organization-Specific HCP Implementation Process**

Outsource UCC management ensures that an HCPA is identified.

### *Required tasks*

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The HCPA ensures that unless the Corporate HCP is followed that an Outsource UCC or local HCP implementation process is developed and implemented that describes the methodologies to accomplish the following tasks:

- Maintain a monitoring program.
- Evaluate noise control measures.
- Obtain baseline audiometric tests
- Provide appropriate hearing protection devices to employees
- Develop and obtain corporate approval of HCP training.
- Conduct and document HCP training.
- Arrange for annual audiometric testing for employees.
- Complete an annual assessment of the HCP and review with HCPM.
- Keep the organization-specific HCP implementation process up to date.

## *Maintains copy of program and plan*

The HCPA maintains a copy of the Corporate HCP and the Outsource UCC and/or location-specific HCP implementation process unless the Corporate HCP is the primary document.

## Definitions

### **Action Level (AL)**

An 8-hour TWA of 85 decibels measured on the A-weighted scale, slow response, or equivalently, a “dose” of fifty percent.

### **Administrative Controls**

Changes in the work schedule or operations that reduce noise exposure.

### **Audiogram**

A chart, table, or graph resulting from an audiometric test showing an individual’s hearing threshold levels as a function of frequency.

### **Audiometric Testing**

Hearing test conducted after a prescribed period of quiet (14 hours).

### **Baseline Audiogram**

Result from the employee’s initial audiometric test.

### **California Construction-Related Activities**

Activities and operations that are performed in connection with the construction, alteration, painting, repairing, construction maintenance, renovation, removal, or wrecking of any fixed structure or its parts.

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## **dba (Decibels –A-Weighted)**

A unit of measurement of sound level corrected to the A-weighted scale, as defined in ANSI S1.4-1971 (R1976), American National Standard Specifications for Sound Level Meters, using a reference level of 20 micropascals (0.00002 Newton per square meter). The ear is not sensitive equally to all frequencies. This means that the perception of noise is not equal at all frequencies. In other words, the measured noise levels in dB will not reflect the actual human perception of the loudness of the noise. Human perception is less efficient at low and high frequencies than it is at medium or speech range frequencies. The A-weighted scale is designed to mimic what the human ear perceives.

## **Decibel (dB)**

Unit of measurement of sound level. Decibel is a logarithmic unit of measurement that expresses the magnitude of a physical quantity - noise in this case - (usually power or intensity) relative to a specified or implied *reference level*. For noise, the reference level is 20 micropascals or 0.000002 Newton per square meter which is usually considered the threshold of human hearing.

## **Dosimeter**

A sound level meter that integrates sound over time; based on a “Dose” of 100% being the PNE of 90 dBA for 8 hours.

## **Engineering Controls**

Any modification or replacement of equipment, or related physical change at the noise source or along the transmission path, that reduces the noise level or the employee’s exposure to noise.

## **General Industry-Related Activities**

Those activities not regulated by construction, maritime, or other industry-specific regulations.

## **High Noise Area**

An area that has sound levels above 90 dBA or, in which, if a person were to work in the area for a work shift, they would be exposed at or above a TWA of 85 dBA without regard to hearing protection for General Industry-Related Operations.

## **OSHA or Cal/OSHA Recordable Hearing Loss**

If an employee's audiogram reveals that the employee has experienced a work-related STS in hearing in one or both ears, and the employee's total hearing level is 25 decibels (dB) or more above audiometric zero (averaged at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz) in the same ear(s) as the STS, the case must be recorded on the Cal/OSHA Form 300 or the Federal OSHA Form 300 depending on the jurisdiction.

## **Noise Reduction Rating (NRR)**

EPA defined noise reduction ratings based on laboratory-based noise attenuation of a hearing protector in decibels (dB).

## **Permissible Noise Exposure (PNE)**

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Permitted duration by sound level that an employee is allowed to be exposed to without engineering controls, administrative controls, or wearing hearing protectors.

## Qualified Persons

A person(s) who by reason of experience or instruction has the necessary skills and knowledge to perform an assigned task correctly. The HCPA, location, SES, or organization identifies such persons to perform specific task related to this program. Corporate Safety/HCPM confirms that the person has the necessary skills and knowledge to perform the task properly.

## Sound Level Meter

An instrument for the measurement of sound level.

## Standard Threshold Shift (STS)

As defined under occupational safety and health standards; a change in hearing threshold, relative to the baseline audiogram for that employee, of an average of 10 decibels or more at 2000, 3000, and 4000 hertz (Hz) in one or both ears.

## References

### *Regulations*

29 CFR 1910.95, Occupational Noise Exposure

[http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr\\_2008/julqtr/pdf/29cfr1910.95.pdf](http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2008/julqtr/pdf/29cfr1910.95.pdf)

### *Federal (applicable to Nevada)*

29 CFR 1926.52, Occupational Noise Exposure

[http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr\\_2008/julqtr/pdf/29cfr1926.52.pdf](http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2008/julqtr/pdf/29cfr1926.52.pdf)

### *State*

Title 8, CCR, Article 105, Control of Noise Exposure, Sections 5095 through 5100.

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/title8/5095.html>

### *Check which was dropped*

Title 8, CCR, Article 3, Section 1521, Ear Protection. <http://www.dir.ca.gov/Title8/1521.html>

Title 8, CCR, Article 2, Section 14300.10, Recording Criteria for Cases Involving Occupational Hearing Loss [http://www.dir.ca.gov/T8/14300\\_10.html](http://www.dir.ca.gov/T8/14300_10.html)