

## **Safety & Risk Management Policies and Procedures**

**Title:** Hearing Conservation Policy

**Date:** January 2002

**Rationale:** Chronic exposure to high levels of noise could lead to permanent hearing loss. Noise induced hearing loss is very preventable with proper administrative and engineering controls. Noise exposure can cause hearing loss, communication problems, and physiological disorders. Noise exposures can cause safety and performance related issues due to loss of comprehension of vocal directions or other communication devices/signals. Dual sources of noise/sound could cause distraction and inattention to the task at hand.

**Goals:** To prevent employee noise induced hearing loss and other non-auditory disorders as well as preventing distraction and inattention to tasks from other noise sources.

**Policy & Procedure:** Employees using equipment producing high noise levels for periods of up to four hours or more per day or working up to four hours per day in areas of high noise levels, shall wear hearing protective devices (HPD). Affected employees are not authorized to wear ear buds/headphones or listen to recreational music/sound or other noise sources while exposed to occupational noise. In addition, certain departments do not allow the use of ear buds/headphones due to various factors including distraction, inattention, inability to quickly and safely respond to external environmental factors, co-workers and general safety and security concerns.

High noise generating equipment: Central Plant chiller room, mowers, weed-eaters, leaf blowers, power saws, grinders, power sanders, etc.

Supervisors are responsible to identify these affected employees and ensure they are properly and consistently using/wearing hearing protective devices per manufacturer's instructions and/or are not using ear buds/earphones when exposed to occupational noise and/or are not authorized due to distraction and inattention safety concerns. Supervisors are responsible to periodically monitor affected employees to ensure hearing conservation policy is followed.

\*\* Based on noise meter surveys and personal dosimetry testing, results indicate noise exposure levels are below OSHA's PEL of 90 dba TWA and below 85 dba over an eight hour time-weighted average (TWA). Affected employees therefor do not need to enroll in a formal hearing conservation program with annual audiometric testing.

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Date:

Approved (signature and date):

Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Director of Physical Plant \_\_\_\_\_

AVP for Facilities \_\_\_\_\_

Vice President for Fiscal Affairs If needed \_\_\_\_\_

Copy:

All supervisors \_\_\_\_\_

Related crafts \_\_\_\_\_

Department Heads \_\_\_\_\_

VP's \_\_\_\_\_

President \_\_\_\_\_