Hearing Conservation Program

San Bernardino Valley College

701 South Mount Vernon Avenue

San Bernardino, California 92410

&

Crafton Hills College

11711 Sand Canyon Road

Yucaipa, California 92399

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Policy Statement

It is the policy of the San Bernardino Community College District to protect the hearing of all workers whose noise exposures equal or exceed an action level of 85 decibels (dB) for an 8-hour day. In accordance with this policy and Title 8 CCR 5097, this organization has established a Hearing Conservation Program. This program applies to all persons working in areas or with equipment that have noise levels of 85 decibels, A weighting (dBA) or higher. This program applies to all operations and work areas where employees and other personnel may be exposed to hazardous noise levels.

Definitions

- Action Level—A sound level equaling an 8-hour TWA of 85 decibels on an A-weighted level (dBA), or equivalently a noise dose of 50 percent, as specified in the OSHA regulation at 29 CFR 1910.95.
- Audiogram—A chart, graph, or table that results from an audiometric test. An audiogram shows an individual's hearing threshold level as a function of frequency (hertz).
- Audiologist—A professional specializing in the study and rehabilitation of hearing who is certified by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association or licensed by a state board of examiners.
- Baseline Audiogram—Reference audiogram against which future audiograms are compared.
- Decibel (dB)—Unit of measurement of sound level.
- dBA (decibels on an A-weighted level)—A measurement of noise intensity obtained using a sound-measuring instrument commonly used to define degrees of auditory risk. The A-weighting is a measurement that closely parallels the auditory characteristics of normal human hearing.
- Dosimetry—A technique of sound measurement that integrates cumulative noise exposure over time and directly indicates a noise dose.
- Hearing Conservation Program (HCP)—An annual audiometric testing and hearing conservation training program for employees exposed to sound levels equaling or exceeding the action level.
- Hearing Protection Device (HPD)—Personal protective equipment worn by an individual for the purpose of reducing noise exposure, including reusable and disposable earplugs, earmuffs, and similar noise attenuating devices.
- Noise dose—A measure of the noise exposure to which a person is subjected in the workplace.
- Standard Threshold Shift (STS)—A change in hearing threshold, relative to the baseline audiogram, of an average of 10 dB or more at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz in either ear, taking into account any changes due to presbycusis (age-related hearing loss).
- Time-Weighted Average (TWA)—Noise exposure averaged over a designated period of time (example: 8-hour TWA).

Responsibilities

Program Administrator

The College President is the HCP Program Administrator, the Vice President of Administration is the designee, and both have the authority and responsibility for implementing and maintaining this Hearing Conservation Program (HCP) for their respective campuses. Assigned campus designees are as follows:

Vice President of Administrative Services/SBVC, Site Safety Officer
San Bernardino Valley College
Tel: (909) 384-8958
&
Vice President of Administrative Services/CHC, Site Safety Officer
Crafton Hills College
Tel: (909) 389-3210

The HCP Administrators and designees may be assisted in their duties by the District Environmental Health & Safety Administrator. The EH&S Administrator can be reached at (909) 388-6935 during regular business hours or EHS@SBCCD.edu.

The Program Administrator is responsible for administering the Hearing Conservation Program. Duties of the program administrator include:

- Conduct and document noise surveys areas/activities where potential noise exposures may equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average (TWA) of 85 dBA;
- When notified by employee or employee supervisor, perform a sound-level survey in areas where a change in activity, process, equipment, or controls may have resulted in either an increase or a decrease in employee exposure;
- Notify supervisors and affected employees when monitoring indicates an exposure at or above action level, and participate in the Hearing Conservation Program when it becomes mandatory;
- Identify noise hazard areas and post appropriate signs;
- Organize hearing test (audiometry) program;
- Purchase and select hearing protection devices (HPDs) and recommend appropriate engineering and/or administrative noise controls;
- Develop a training program and ensure annual training of employees enrolled in the HCP in hearing conservation issues and practices; and
- Maintain records of all noise monitoring, training, and instrument calibration.

Supervisors

Duties of the Supervisors include:

- Notify employees of potential noise hazard areas.
- Evaluate the feasibility of engineering and/or administrative noise controls.
  Identify employees exposed to sound levels equaling or exceeding the action level and report such information to the HCP Administrator and Safety & Risk Management Department.

Employees

Duties of all SBCCD employees include:

- Wearing HPDs when entering or working in identified noise hazard areas in accordance with the posted warning;
- Reporting potential noise hazard exposures to the supervisor; and
- Complying with the SBCCD HCP requirements when identified as being exposed to sound levels equaling or exceeding the action level.

Employees who do not comply with the provisions of this program will be disciplined in accordance with the SBCCD policy.

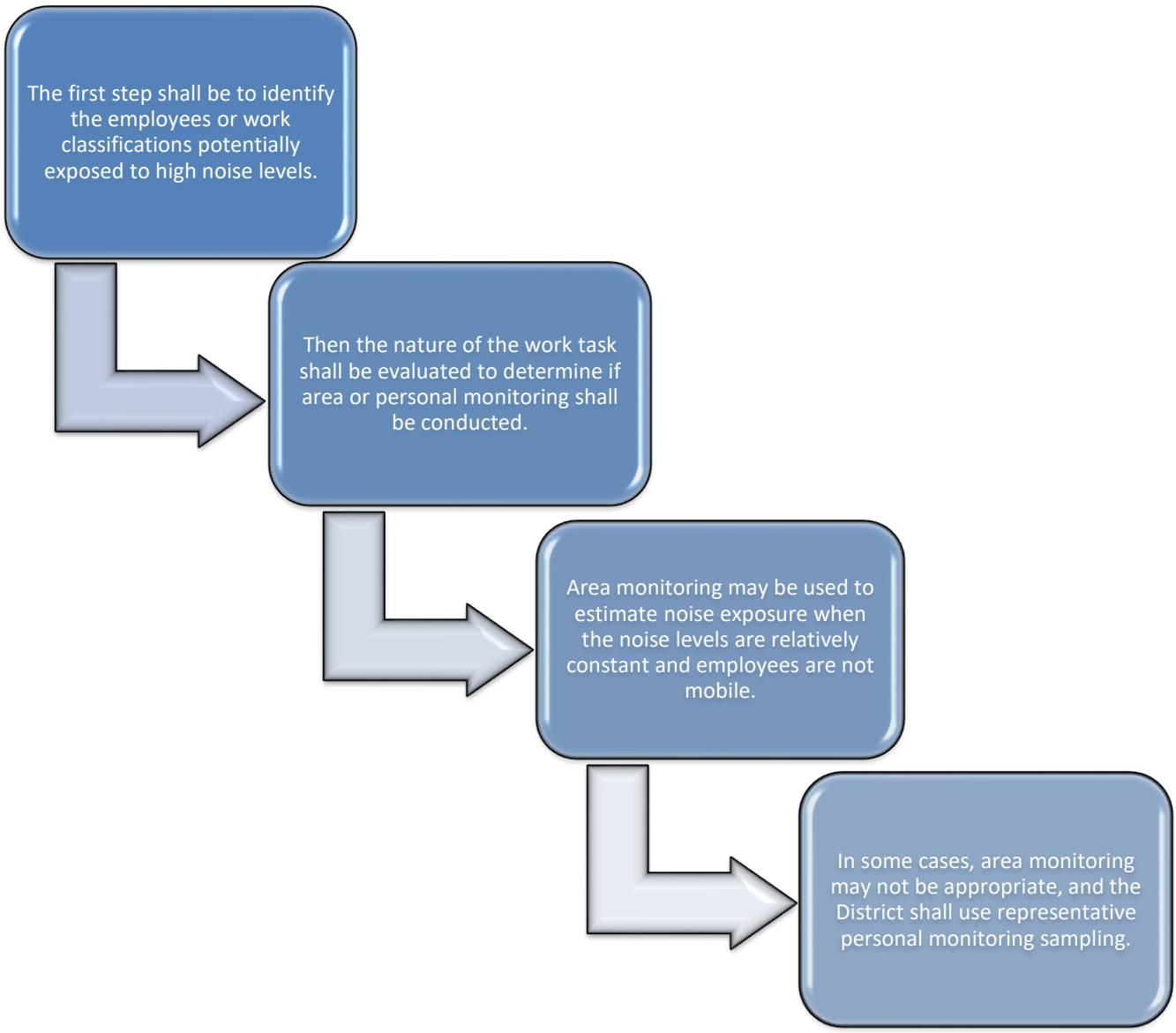
Program Elements

Noise Surveys and Monitoring

A noise survey will be conducted to identify the areas where employee noise exposure may exceed an 85 dBA 8-hour TWA. Workers will be monitored in questionable areas with a calibrated audio dosimeter that will measure all continuous, intermittent, and impulsive sound levels between 80–130 decibels on the “A-weighted” scale (slow response). The sampling strategy shall be designed to identify employees for inclusion in this conversation program and to enable the proper selection of hearing protectors. Employees will have the opportunity to observe any measurements of employee noise exposure. Each employee will be notified of the monitoring results if exposed at or above the 85 dBA TWA. Additional monitoring will be conducted if changes in production, equipment, processes, or controls suggest that noise exposures may have increased.

When information indicates that any employee's exposure may equal or exceed an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 dBA, the District shall obtain measurements for employees who may be exposed at or above that level. The monitoring may be either area monitoring or personal monitoring that is representative of the employee's exposure. All instruments used to measure employee noise exposure shall be calibrated to ensure measurement accuracy.

Noise Monitoring Program



Such as cases with high worker mobility, significant variation in sound level or a significant component of impulse noise.

Engineering and Administrative Controls

When noise exposure levels exceed the permissible limits, SBCCD will implement engineering controls as the primary mechanism to attenuate noise emissions. The following are examples of engineering controls which may be implemented:

- Install controls on vibrating surfaces.
- Enclose machinery.
- Install barriers or insulation between noise sources and operators.

The following are examples of administrative controls which may be implemented in conjunction with engineering controls to limit the amount of time that an employee works in areas where the 8-hour TWA equals or exceeds 90 dBA:

- Employee rotation
- Scheduling equipment operation

Administrative controls will neither be used as a substitute for nor replace applicable requirements for a Hearing Conservation Program.

Audiometry (Hearing Tests)

Audiometric Tests
A baseline audiometric test will be done within one year of the first exposure at or above the Action Level (85 dbA TWA), and at least annually thereafter.

- Baseline audiometric tests will be performed by a licensed or certified audiologist, otolaryngologist, qualified physician, or qualified technician responsible to the audiologist or physician. A baseline audiogram (i.e., hearing test) will be obtained for all employees with noise exposures equal to or greater than an 85 dBA TWA. The baseline audiogram will be obtained within six months of an employee's first exposure to noise above the action level. In the case that a mobile van is used for testing, the audiogram will be obtained within 1 year. Employees will use hearing protection six months after their first exposure until a baseline audiogram is obtained.
    - Both a pre-employment and termination audiogram will be obtained for all employees. Workers will be informed that baseline audiometric testing must be preceded by at least 14 hours without exposure to noise levels above 80 dBA. Workers may use hearing protection to meet this requirement.
    - All audiometric testing and evaluation will be provided free of charge to our employees.
- Annual audiograms are required for all workers with noise exposures equal to or greater than an 85 dBA TWA.
- An annual audiogram may be substituted for the baseline audiogram when the audiologist or physician evaluating the program declares:
    - A Standard Threshold Shift (STS) is persistent, or
    - The hearing threshold in the annual audiogram indicates a significant improvement over the baseline audiogram.

Evaluation of Audiogram

- The audiologist, otolaryngologist, or physician shall review problem audiograms and shall determine whether there is a need for further evaluation. SBCCD shall provide the evaluator will the following:
  - The contents of this program.
  - The baseline audiogram and most recent audiogram of the employee to be evaluated.
  - Measurements of background sound pressure levels in the audiometric test room.
  - Records of audiometric calibrations.

- If a comparison of the annual audiogram with the baseline audiogram indicates that an STS has occurred, a retest within 30 days will be conducted, and the second test may be considered the annual audiogram. If an STS is confirmed, the employee will be:
  - Informed in writing within 21 days of the determination,
  - Referred to an audiologist, otolaryngologist, or qualified physician for further evaluation.
  - Provided with both the baseline and the most recent audiogram of the employee and the required records on the audiometer and the audiometric test room, and
  - Fitted or refitted with adequate hearing protectors, shown how to use them, and required to wear them.
- If subsequent audiometric testing of an employee whose exposure to noise is less than an 8-hour time-weighted average of 90 decibels indicates that a standard threshold shift is not persistent, then the following shall occur:
  - The employee shall be informed of the new audiometric interpretation.
  - The employee may discontinue the required use of hearing protectors.
- For workers exposed to noise levels below 90 dBA TWA, the use of hearing protection will continue until subsequent audiometric testing indicates that the STS is not permanent.

Hearing Protection Devices (HPDs) and Their Use

The District will make hearing protectors available at no cost to all employees who are exposed to an 8-hour TWA of 85 dBA or greater, required to wear hearing protectors because baseline audiograms have not been established yet, or have experienced a standard threshold shift.

- The District shall provide the employees the opportunity to select their hearing protectors from a variety of suitable hearing protectors.
- All HPDs provided by the District will provide a noise reduction rating (NRR) equal to or greater than 30 db.
  - Hearing protectors will attenuate employee exposure to at least to an 8-hour time-weighted average of 90 decibels.
  - For employees who have experienced a standard threshold shift, hearing protectors will attenuate employee exposures to at least an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels or below.
- The employees will be trained in the proper use and care of all hearing protectors provided.
- The District will ensure proper initial fitting of hearing protectors.
- Supervisors will be responsible for issuing HPDs and enforcing their use. Failure on the part of the employee to comply with the requirement to correctly wear hearing protection may result in disciplinary action.
- The adequacy of hearing protector attenuation shall be reevaluated whenever employee noise exposures increase to the extent that the hearing protectors provided may no longer provide adequate attenuation. More effective hearing protectors will be provided where necessary.

Training

Training will be provided to all employees who are exposed to noise at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 dBA. Training will be conducted when hearing protection devices are first issued, and annually thereafter. Training will be conducted by Safety & Risk Management Department, using the following aids: Keenan SafeColleges, Power Point, Visual Aids, Handouts, Videos.

Recordkeeping

Records for the HCP will be kept in the Human Resources Department, Safety & Risk Management Department and will include:

- A record of training received by each employee, dated and signed, will be kept on file until next training takes place- one year);
- Sound level meter surveys/noise dosimetry surveys (retained for at least 2 years); and
- Audiometric tests shall be retained for duration of worker's employment and include the following:
  - Name and job classification of the employee.
  - Date of the audiogram.
  - The examiner's name.
  - Date of the last acoustic or exhaustive calibration of the audiometer.
  - Employee's most recent noise exposure assessment.
- Accurate records shall be maintained for the measurements of the background sound pressure levels in the audiometric test rooms to use for a future needed reference. a

Program Evaluation

The SBCCD Hearing Conservation Program will undergo regular review and necessary revisions periodically by the Environmental Health and Safety Administrator in consultation with the Program Administrator.

References

- 29 CFR1910.95
- 29 CFR 1910.95(k)(1)
- 8 CCR 5100
- 8 CCR 5097
- 8 CCR 5098(b)(2) and (3)
- 8 CCR 5098(b)(4)

Appendix A-1: SBVC Site Specific Information

College President	• (909) 384-4477
VP Administrative Services	• (909) 384-8958
Adminstrative Services	• (909) 384-8965
Safety & Risk Management	• (909) 388-6935
Web Links	• **https://sbccd.org/ehs**

Appendix A-2: SBVC Site Specific Information

Job Duty

- Groundskeeping:
  - Mowing
  - Trimming
  - Blowing
  - Edging
  - Sawing

8-Hr TWA

- 89.4 dbA

HPD Required

- Earmuffs, earplugs or canal caps

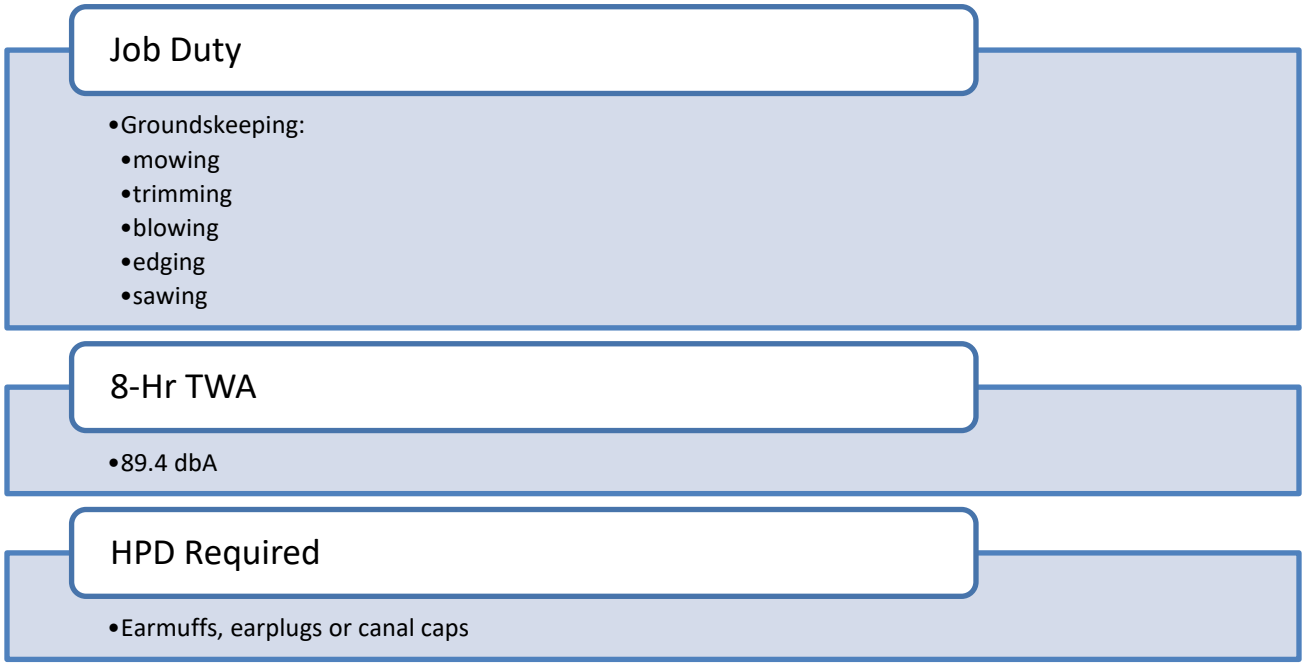
HPDs Will Be Available During All Shifts In The Following Locations:

- Maintenance and Operations Office

Appendix B-1: CHC Site Specific Information

College President	• (909) 389-3200
VP Administrative Services	• (909) 389-3210
Administrative Services	• (909) 389-3211
Safety & Risk Management	• (909) 388-6935
Web Links	• **https://sbccd.org/ehs**

Appendix B-2: CHC Site Specific Information



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