

WAC 296-307-63205 Conduct employee noise exposure monitoring.

(1) The employer must conduct employee noise exposure monitoring to determine the employee's actual exposure when reasonable information indicates that any employee's exposure may equal or exceed 85 dBA TWA₈.

Notes:

1. Representative monitoring may be used where several employees perform the same tasks in substantially similar conditions.
2. Examples of information or situations that can indicate exposures which equal or exceed 85 dBA TWA₈, include:
 - a. Noise in the workplace that interferes with people speaking, even at close range;
 - b. Information from the manufacturer of equipment the employer uses in the workplace that indicates high noise levels for machines in use;
 - c. Reports from employees of ringing in their ears or temporary hearing loss;
 - d. Warning signals or alarms that are difficult to hear;
 - e. Work near abrasive blasting or jack hammering operations;
 - f. Use of tools and equipment such as the following:
 - i. Heavy equipment or machinery;
 - ii. Fuel-powered hand tools;
 - iii. Compressed air-driven tools or equipment in frequent use;
 - iv. Power saws, grinders or chippers;
 - v. Powder-actuated tools.

(2) The employer must follow applicable guidance in WAC 296-307-634 when conducting noise exposure monitoring.

(3) The employer must make sure the sampling for noise exposure monitoring identifies:

(a) All employees whose exposure equals or exceeds the following:

- (i) 85 dBA TWA₈ (noise dosimetry, providing an average exposure over an eight-hour time period);
- (ii) 115 dBA (slow response sound level meter, identifying short-term noise exposures);
- (iii) 140 dBC (fast response sound level meter, identifying almost instantaneous noise exposures).

(b) Exposure levels for selection of hearing protection.

(4) The employer must provide exposed employees and their representatives with an opportunity to observe any measurements of employee noise exposure that are conducted.

(5) The employer must notify each employee whose exposure equals or exceeds 85 dBA TWA₈ of the monitoring results within five working days of when the employer receives the results.

(6) The employer must conduct additional noise monitoring whenever a change in production, process, equipment or controls, may reasonably be expected to result in:

- (a) Additional employees whose exposure equals or exceeds 85 dBA TWA₈;
- (b) Employees exposed to higher level of noise requiring more effective hearing protection.

Note:

- Conditions that may be expected to increase exposure include:
1. Adding machinery to the work area;
 2. Increasing production rates;
 3. Removal or deterioration of noise control devices;
 4. Increased use of noisy equipment;
 5. Change in work schedule;
 6. Change of job duties.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 20-21-091, § 296-307-63205, filed 10/20/20, effective 11/20/20; WSR 05-01-166, § 296-307-63205, filed 12/21/04, effective 4/2/05.]