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| CITY OF APPLETON PERSONNEL POLICY | TITLE: HEARING CONSERVATION PROGRAM OSHA 29 CFR 1910.95 | |
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I PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to prevent hearing loss and comply with OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.95 – “Occupational Noise Exposure,” Hearing Conservation Amendment.

II POLICY:

The administration of the program will be the responsibility of the Human Resources Department as well as the supervisors and staff/safety coordinator at each major department/division. Violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

III DISCUSSION:

This policy outlines the regulations, testing and training requirements mandated by OSHA 29 CFR.1910.95 and addresses how the City will administer its hearing conservation program.

IV DEFINITIONS:

Standard threshold shift (STS) – an average shift of 10dB or more at 2000, 3000, 4000 Hz.
OSHA – Occupational Safety and Health Association
ANSI – American National Standards Institute

V PROCEDURES

A. The Human Resources Department will coordinate the following:

1. Yearly hearing tests for all employees identified as being in the field a major portion of their working day or employees who are exposed to an eight-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels or greater noise level. (Fire Department Operations employees will

complete annual tests as part of the annual NFPA physicals.)

2. Record keeping.

3. Evaluating the program on a yearly basis.

a. Coordination of and supervision of noise exposure monitoring.

b. Identify employees to be included in the Hearing Conservation Program.

B. Departments will be responsible for the following:

1. Ordering and selecting at least three different kinds of hearing protection.

2. Development of departmental policies relating to the use of hearing protection.

3. Providing employee training programs annually.

4. Where and whenever possible, using engineering controls to reduce noise exposures.

C. The following guidelines have been established to ensure hearing protection for all City employees.

1. Noise Level Readings – Readings will be conducted:

a. When requested by an employee

b. When requested by a department supervisor or safety representative

c. When new equipment is purchased/implemented in an area not previously requiring hearing protection

d. When a hearing test detects a significant loss in a group of employee's within the same work area/work group

2. Individuals who are familiar with the testing equipment will conduct the monitoring.

3. The results of the monitoring will be kept in the Human Resources Department.

D. Testing

1. The following permanent City employees will be tested on a yearly basis:

- All fire personnel (excluding clerical)

- All police officers

- Public Works (all field personnel)

- Environmentalists, Weights and Measures

- Valley Transit Mechanics and Service Person

- Water Plant personnel (excluding clerical)

- Waste Water personnel (excluding clerical)

- Facilities Grounds and Construction Management personnel

2. Employees will have the opportunity to be tested during regular work hours. The test will be provided at no cost to the employee. Employees who fail to attend a scheduled appointment in the mobile unit will be sent to ThedaCare At Work and the cost of this visit will be paid by their department.

3. Personnel certified in hearing conservation and testing will conduct audiometer testing and training. Testing will be conducted with equipment that meets the specifications of ANSI3.6-1969 and OSHA. The technician will be responsible to a physician.

4. Tests will be pure tone, air conduction, hearing threshold examinations at test frequencies of 500, 1000, 2000, 3000, 4000, 5000 and 6000 Hz. Each ear will be tested separately.
5. The functional operation of the audiometer will be checked by biological calibration prior to each day's use. An acoustic check will be performed if the biological calibration indicated deviations of 10 dB or greater, and an exhaustive calibration will be performed if the biological calibration indicated deviations of 15 dB or greater.
6. If an STS (an average shift in either ear of 10dB or more at 2000, 3000 and 4000 Hz) is identified:
 - a. The employee will be notified in writing.
 - b. The use of hearing protection will be mandatory and this shall be enforced.
 - c. The employee will be refitted and retrained in the use of hearing protection.

E. Hearing Protection

1. The City shall make hearing protection available to all employees exposed to an eight-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels or greater and for those who work in the field. Hearing protection will be provided at no cost to the employee.
2. Employees shall be given the opportunity to select their hearing protection from a variety of suitable hearing protection provided by the employer. (Per law at least three different types of hearing protection must be available.) Hearing protection will be available in an accessible place at all times.
3. The supervisor/safety coordinator at each major department/division shall ensure that hearing protection is worn by any employee who is exposed to an eight-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels or greater.

F. Employee Training

1. Personnel certified in hearing conservation and testing as well as departmental supervisors and the City Safety Coordinator will conduct annual training for employees who are tested yearly. Information will include: the effects of noise on hearing, the purpose and the use of hearing protectors, the advantages and the disadvantages of various types, instructions in the selection, fitting, use and care of hearing protectors, and the purpose of audiometric testing and an explanation of the test procedures.

G. Record Keeping

1. Audiometric tests will be retained in the employee medical file for the duration of a worker's employment. At the time of separation the medical file will be kept for an additional 30 years.
2. All records required by this section shall be provided upon request to employees and former employees or representatives designated by the individual employee.