



## Keep Training Fresh And Innovative

The OSHA noise standard (29 CFR 1910.95) mandates annual Hearing Loss Prevention Program training:

### **1910.95(k)(1)**

The employer shall institute a training program for all employees who are exposed to noise at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels, and shall ensure employee participation in such program.

### **1910.95(k)(2)**

The training program shall be repeated annually for each employee included in the hearing conservation program. Information provided in the training program shall be updated to be consistent with changes in protective equipment and work processes.

### **1910.95(k)(3)**

The employer shall ensure that each employee is informed of the following:

#### **..1910.95(k)(3)(i)**

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The effects of noise on hearing;

#### **1910.95(k)(3)(ii)**

The purpose of hearing protectors, the advantages, disadvantages, and attenuation of various types, and instructions on selection, fitting, use, and care; and

#### **1910.95(k)(3)(iii)**

The purpose of audiometric testing, and an explanation of the test procedures.

Effective training is arguably the most important component in any Hearing Loss Prevention Program. It is also perhaps the most overlooked and understated component.

When conducting training, keep certain points in mind.

1. There is no correlation between training duration and resulting effectiveness. In fact, many successful training models are short in duration and long on impact. A well-



presented eight-minute training session may be more effective than a 20-minute “yawner”. If the pupils in the eyes of your audience become fixed and dilated during your annual training, it is time for a change.

2. If you rely on the same training video year after year, shop around for another. The risk of training “tune-out” during repetitive, duplicitous, and stale presentations is high.
3. Many hearing protection companies offer colorful hearing protection literature, written in laymen’s terms. Such literature is also available in different languages.
4. Be creative. For example, a highly effective training technique is to set up a sound system (with two speakers minimal) in an enclosed room. With no hearing protectors in place, play music and/or recorded voice at a comfortable level. Next, ask your captive audience to don earplugs. Play the recording again. While not completely realistic, this exercise gives participants a feeling of difficulties associated in having to manage day-to-day situations with significant hearing loss.
5. As the saying goes, “all is fair in love and war”. For those stubborn cases where nothing seems to get the point across, pull out the “grandchild” weapon. Relate the likelihood that one day (if not already) grandchildren will enter their life and that they will one day wish to communicate with them.

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Authored by: Robert Williams, Au.D. | Director Audiology | T K Group, Inc.