



Hearing Conservation

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Approved by: Jim Toye, City Manager

Signature:  **Policy No:** 8

Effective: August 17, 2018 **Replaces:** June 15, 2015

Policy:

The City of Prince Albert believes in providing a work environment in which all employees are protected from noise induced hearing loss.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that noise levels are considered when obtaining new equipment, that all attempts are made to reduce noise levels below 80 dba_{lex} and to ensure that appropriate hearing protection is provided and used when noise levels cannot be reduced below 85 dba. This policy also monitors the overall program to ensure that controls are sufficient to prevent any hearing loss.

This policy was designed to ensure compliance with The Saskatchewan Employment Act and Part VIII of The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996.

Scope:

This policy applies to all employees of the City of Prince Albert.

Responsibility:

1. **Senior Management:**

Ensure that internal procedures are developed and implemented, which require:

- a. That included with the purchase of new equipment, the level of sound emitted is considered.
- b. That every reasonable attempt is made to reduce sound levels below 80 dba_{lex} for both equipment and work areas.
- c. That appropriate hearing protection is provided to workers that are required to work in areas or on equipment that are measured to be above 80 dba_{lex}.

- d. That requires workers to wear appropriate hearing protection whenever sound levels are measured above 85 dba.
- e. That ensures that hearing tests are conducted on employees that are exposed to noise levels above 85 dba_{lex} or regularly in areas/equipment posted above 90 dba, within their first year of employment and every two years thereafter.
- f. That ensures that all noisy equipment and work areas are tested to determine the appropriate dba rating.
- g. That provides an opportunity for all employees to consult with their physician or an audiologist during work time when noise induced hearing loss is detected.

2. **Managers:**

- a. Ensure that all workers under their supervision and provided with appropriate hearing protection when sound levels are above 80 dba_{lex}.
- b. Ensure that workers are wearing appropriate hearing protection when working in areas or on equipment which have sound levels above 85 dba_{lex}.
- c. Ensure that workers are trained in the appropriate selection, care and use of hearing protection and the hazards associated with occupational noise exposure. This training is to be documented on a tool box talk form.
- d. Ensure that all new employees, exposed to sound levels above 85 dba_{lex} or regularly in areas/equipment posted above 90 dba, are provided with an opportunity, at work, to obtain an appropriate hearing test within their first year of employment and every two years thereafter and allowed to consult when noise induced hearing loss is detected.
- e. Advise the Coordinator- Health, Safety and Environment of any changes in equipment or work areas that may influence sound levels and arrange to have those areas tested.

3. **Employees:**

- a. Participate in the hearing conservation program.
- b. Wear appropriate hearing protection at all times when working in areas in which sound measurements indicate levels in excess of 85 dba.
- c. Refrain from increasing sound levels, in their work area, to above 80 dba.
- d. Report any area that has not been posted that they believe exceeds 80 dba.

4. **Coordinator- Health, Safety and Environment:**

- a. Assist managers in training staff on the appropriate selection, use, care of hearing protection and the associated hazards of occupational noise exposure.
- b. Coordinate sound level testing for all areas that are considered noisy and ensure that a record is maintained of all measurements taken that is available to managers.
- c. Ensure that all equipment and work areas that have an average dba rating of 80 dba or higher are posted with the appropriate sound level.
- d. Coordinate hearing tests for all staff that are exposed to sound levels in excess of 85 dba_{lex} or regularly in areas/equipment posted above 90 dba. and consult with individuals when required.
- e. Coordinate, review and amend the overall Hearing Conservation Program as the program supervisor within the meaning of section 114(2) of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996.

5. **Occupational Health and Safety Committee(s):**

- a. Review the Hearing Conservation Policy and associated procedures every three years and provide recommendations for improvements.

Definitions:

dba means the sound pressure level in decibels measured on the A scale of a sound meter.

dba_{lex} means the level of a workers total exposure to noise, in dba, averaged over an entire workday and adjusted to an equivalent eight hour exposure period.

Noise is unwanted sound that is capable of damaging an individual's hearing

References and Related Statements of Policy and Procedure:

The Saskatchewan Employment Act

The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 1996

Personal Protective Equipment Policy

Purchasing Policy