



WASHINGTON MILITARY DEPARTMENT POLICY

Safety Policy 01-060-06

HEARING CONSERVATION

1. **PURPOSE:** To prevent employee hearing loss by minimizing, and providing protection from, noise exposures to comply with WAC 296-817-200.
2. **APPLICABILITY:** While it is my intent to have standardized and comprehensive safety, loss control, risk management and accident prevention programs across the Washington Military Department, this Policy is primarily applicable to all State construction and maintenance employees. Similar safety programs are mandated and in place for the Washington Air National Guard and Washington Army National Guard that apply to federal personnel to include Active Guard Reservists, traditional guardsmen in a federal military status and federal military technicians. It is my goal to properly integrate and interface these programs between divisions. For example, state employees who conduct maintenance activities in federal / state buildings occupied by National Guard units will have safety, occupational health and industrial hygiene interfaces and overlaps. I expect cooperation and collaboration in these areas to ensure there are no gaps in our programs and that issues are effectively managed by affected members, safety managers and our respective safety councils.
3. **REFERENCES:**
 - a. Chapter 296-817-200 WAC, Hearing Loss Prevention Program;
 - b. Chapter 296-800 -110 WAC, Employer Responsibilities.
 - c. WMD Policy 01-090-05, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - d. MIL FORM 906, Hazard Assessment & PPE Selection Worksheet
 - e. MIL FORM 907 Employee PPE Training Record and Certification
 - f. MIL FORM 908, Personal Protective Equipment Inspector Record
4. **POLICY:** The Department recognizes the hazard of sustained noise levels that are equal to or greater than 85 decibels (dBA) Time Weighted Average (TWA₈) to adversely affect employee hearing. This policy in conjunction with the corresponding procedure outlines the WMD Hearing Conservation Program to protect those identified employees.
 - a. Department directors who have employees that are exposed to noise levels that are equal to or greater than 85 decibels (dBA) Time Weighted Average (TWA₈) shall designate a staff person as the Hearing Conservation Program Administrator.
 - b. Noise levels from suspect equipment and machinery in the work area, as well as any other noise sources in the workplace will be determined.

- c. Noise control - Employees will be protected from confirmed noise exposure by using feasible noise controls (Table 1, Noise Evaluation Criteria).

Table 1 - Noise Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Description	Requirements
85 dBA TWA ₈	Full-day employee noise exposure dose. If you have one or more employees whose exposure equals or exceeds this level, you must have a hearing loss prevention program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Noise controls <li style="text-align: center;">AND - Hearing protection - Training - Audiometric testing
90 dBA TWA ₈	Full-day employee noise exposure dose. If you have one or more employees whose exposure equals or exceeds this level, you must reduce employee noise exposures in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Noise controls <li style="text-align: center;">AND - Hearing protection - Training - Audiometric testing
115 dBA measured using slow response	Extreme noise level (greater than one second in duration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Noise controls <li style="text-align: center;">AND - Hearing protection - Training - Audiometric testing - Signs posted in work areas warning of exposure
140 dBC measured using fast response	Extreme impulse or impact noise (less than one second in duration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Noise controls <li style="text-align: center;">AND - Hearing protection - Training - Audiometric testing - Signs posted in work areas warning of exposure

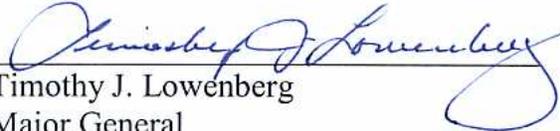
- d. At-risk employees will be provided and will use hearing protection consistent with table 2 Hearing Protection.

Table 2 - Hearing Protection

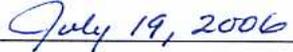
Protection Level	PPE	Noise Reduction NRR "C" Scale	Noise Level
Level 1	Ear Plugs or Head Set or Ear Muff	26 dB	> 80 dB & < 100 dB
Level 2	Double Protection: Ear Plugs + Head Set or Ear Muff	30.5 dB	> 100 dB

- e. At-risk employees will be trained on hearing loss prevention.
- f. At-risk employees who wear hearing aid devices shall remove them and utilize hearing protection as outlined in Table 2 – Hearing Protection.
- g. Baseline and annual hearing tests will be provided to At-risk employees.

This policy will be reviewed and updated on a regular as needed basis.



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Major General
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Date