

Grand Forks Fire Department

Standard Operating Procedures

SOP# 405.02	Section Occupational Safety and Health	Title Hearing Conservation
Authored by:		Michael K. Flermoen, Deputy Fire Chief
Reviewed by:		Michael K. Flermoen, Deputy Fire Chief
Authorized by:		Peter D. O'Neill, Fire Chief
Effective date: 8/31/03	Implementation date: 8/31/03	Revision date:

I. Scope

This standard establishes a hearing conservation program for the department. It was promulgated to prevent job-related hearing impairment.

II. Audiometric Test

- A. As a part of the entry-level medical examination, a member shall be required to have a baseline audiogram performed. This baseline audiogram will become part of the member's permanent medical history file and will be used throughout his tenure with the department to monitor any changes in his hearing.
- B. An audiometric test shall also be conducted as a part of a periodic medical evaluation, and the results will be included in the member's medical history file.

III. Hearing Protection

- A. The noise level will be monitored whenever a process or equipment change occurs.
- B. Warning signs will be posted at the entrances to or on the periphery of work areas where a member may be exposed to a sound level of 90 dBA or greater.
- C. Warning signs will clearly indicate that the area is a noise hazard area and that hearing protection must be worn while in the area.

- D. Hearing protection shall be mandatory in all areas marked as hearing protection areas.
- E. Hearing protection shall also be worn when noisy jobs or tasks are being performed in an area not posted as a hearing protection area, such as:
 - 1. While performing noisy tasks such as grinding, operating air tools, compressors, or generators, and fire pumps, etc.
 - 2. Whenever an employee has to raise his voice to be heard.
- F. Whenever possible, high noise exposures will be reduced to acceptable levels by using proper administrative or engineering controls.
- G. Personal protective equipment will be provided and worn by members when administrative or engineering controls are not feasible or prove ineffective in reducing high noise exposures to acceptable levels.

IV Responsibilities

- A. The safety officer shall be responsible for the identification of products, systems, or operations where the noise level exceeds 90 dBA and for developing control procedures to mitigate the hazard.
- B. Officers shall be responsible for enforcing the provisions of this standard and for immediately correcting any deficiencies that might occur.
- C. Each member shall be responsible for strictly adhering to the provisions of this standard.
- D. Each member shall be responsible for wearing an approved hearing protection device whenever a hearing protection sign is displayed or whenever engaged in an activity where the noise level exceeds 90 dBA.
- E. Each member shall be responsible for making the safety officer aware of any new areas or operations where the noise level may exceed 90 dBA.