

# Supervisors & Managers Guide to Hearing Conservation Programs

## Overview of Supervisor Responsibilities

Supervisors and managers play a critical role in supporting the effective implementation of the Hearing Conservation Program in areas where noise exposure may be present.

When workplace noise levels exceed 85 dBA, the [PEI Occupational Health & Safety General Regulations](#) require employers to identify, assess, and control noise hazards, as well as provide appropriate hearing protection and audiometric testing for affected employees. Supervisors and managers are responsible for helping to identify potential noise concerns, reporting them for assessment, and ensuring that required controls and protective measures are followed.

## Noise Hazard Identification and Assessment

Supervisors must ensure that noise assessments are conducted whenever there is potential for harmful noise exposure. This includes situations where new equipment is introduced, processes change, or employee's express concerns about loud environments. These assessments determine whether noise levels exceed the exposure limit and whether an [Hearing Conservation Program](#) must be initiated or updated. Supervisors should be aware of signs of elevated noise and understand when re-evaluation is needed. For more information about how to report harmful noise exposure contact



## Implementing Effective Noise Controls

Once noise hazards are identified, supervisors must ensure that noise-reduction options are explored before relying on hearing protection. This may include:

- eliminating the noise source,
- installing engineering controls such as sound dampening materials or barriers,
- substituting quieter machinery, or
- adjusting work schedules to reduce exposure
- ensuring signage and procedures are understood and followed

When noise cannot be reduced below regulatory limits, supervisors must ensure workers have appropriate hearing protection, understand how to use it, and wear it consistently.



## Audiometric Testing Requirements

Audiometric testing is **mandatory** for any employee exposed to noise levels above 85 dBA. Supervisors play a vital role in coordinating testing schedules and ensuring employees attend their appointments. This testing helps identify potential hearing loss early and determines whether existing protective measures are effective or need to be improved.

# Noise in the Canadian Workplace

The surest method of preventing noise-induced hearing loss is to eliminate the source or to reduce noise at the source

Low or moderate noise levels can cause annoyance and stress, and make it difficult for people to complete tasks, or talk to and hear one another. Loud noises can cause permanent hearing loss and risk worker safety.



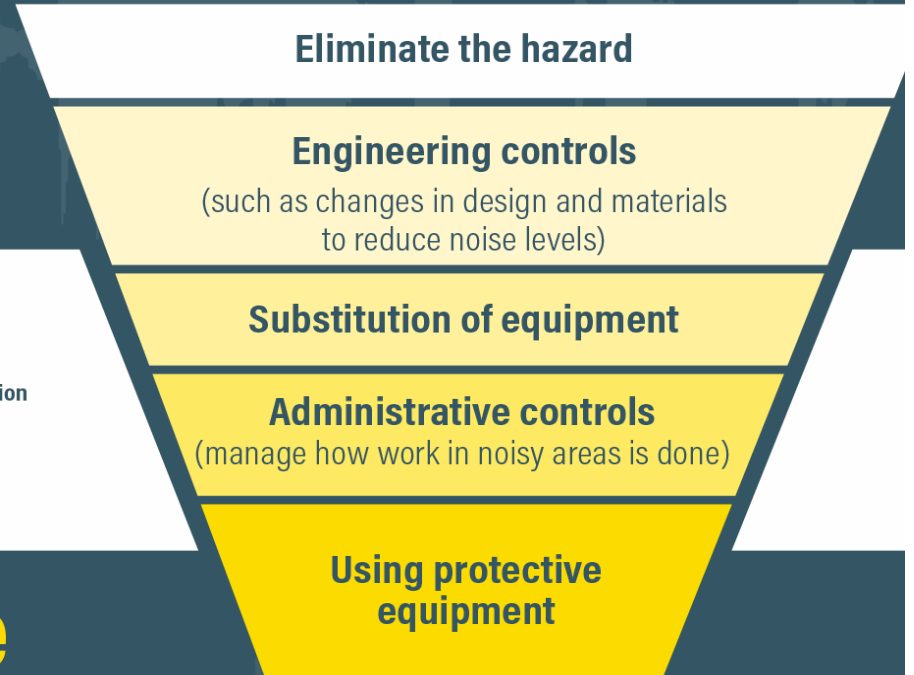
## Promote hearing conservation

- Have managers and supervisors set an example by wearing hearing protection devices whenever required
- Acknowledge good hearing conservation practices
- Be proactive and look for ways to eliminate or reduce noise exposure
- Encourage workers to report noise hazards
- Offer audiometric tests and the opportunity to ask questions



### What's in a hearing conservation program

- Noise assessment
- Hearing protector selection
- Employee training and education
- Audiometric testing
- Maintenance
- Inspection
- Record keeping
- Program evaluation



## Make sure hearing protection is:



**Correct for the job.**

Refer to the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) Standard Z94.2-14.



**Compatible with other required personal protective equipment or communication devices.**



**Comfortable enough to be accepted and worn.**



**Appropriate for the temperature and humidity in the workplace.**



### Noise Source.....dB(A)

Hand-held circular saw (1 m)	115
Textile room	103
Power lawnmower (1 m)	92
Diesel truck at 50 kph (20 m)	85
Passenger car at 60 kph (20 m)	65
Conversation (1 m)	60
Quiet room	40



What the law says: Eight jurisdictions require a hearing conservation program when noise either exceeds their occupational exposure limit (BC, NL, PE, Federal), 85dBA (NT, NU, SK) or when there is excess noise (AB). However, all employers have a duty to provide a safe work environment and take all reasonable precautions to protect the health and safety of employees and others in the workplace.

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