

Hearing Loss Prevention Section
Prevention and Occupational Disease Initiatives
WES Division
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Hearing Loss Prevention in the Construction Industry

The Workers' Compensation Board of B.C. *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*, Section 7.5, requires that employers of noise exposed workers establish and maintain a noise control and hearing conservation program.

The program must include all of the following elements:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a) noise measurement, | e) posting of noise hazard areas, |
| b) education and training, | f) annual hearing tests, and |
| c) engineered noise control, | g) annual program review. |
| d) hearing protection, | |

For the purposes of the annual hearing test element, "Construction Industry firms" are defined as firms registered in Classification Units that commence with "72".

To assist construction industry employers in complying with the **hearing test** requirements, WorkSafeBC has established:

- a central computer registry of hearing test results
- a "Record of Hearing Test" card so each worker can show when his/her hearing was tested,
- a program to pay authorized hearing testers a fee per hearing test conducted on workers in the construction industry.

The cost of testing is paid for by the construction industry as a whole, by charging an additional assessment to the specified CUs.

An employer registered in a construction CU (first two digits are "72") may comply with the requirement to conduct hearing tests without using the WorkSafeBC-administered payment program if the employer wishes. However, only employers who participate in and comply with the WorkSafeBC program will be exempt from the obligation to conduct noise exposure measurement under *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*, 7.3. All other program components must be included and in writing.

Responsibilities:

a. Employer

- post all noise hazard areas.
- provide and ensure wearing of appropriate hearing protection by all workers, at no cost to workers.
- establish and maintain a hearing test program to ensure that noise-exposed workers receive annual testing.
- ensure sufficient time allotted for testing.
- **ensure that the authorized tester:**
 - a) records the hearing tests in a manner required by the board,
 - b) advises the worker of the test results,
 - c) counsels the worker on the use and maintenance of hearing protection,
 - d) provides a copy of the test results (on the “Record of Hearing Test” card) to the worker, and
 - e) submits the test results to the board.

b. Authorized Tester:

- select a suitably quiet site for testing.
- issue a hearing test card (see sample below) to workers after each test and explain its purpose.
- submit test results to WorkSafeBC.
- counsel each worker individually about the result of his/her hearing test and evaluate his/her hearing protection for fit and condition.

c. WorkSafeBC:

- set requirements for, and authorize, facilities and audiometric technicians that provide hearing test and counseling services.
- maintain a centralized data bank of hearing test records.
- upon request, provide statistics to stakeholders for use in the annual program review.
- provide program and education materials.
- provide information for selecting appropriate hearing protection.
- administer construction industry payment program

“Record of Hearing Test Card”--Sample

WORK SAFE BC
RECORD OF HEARING TEST

• Good hearing = 0-25
• Hearing loss in high tones (3, 4, or 6) may be due to noise exposure
• **Wear hearing protection when in noise — on and off the job**

Left Ear						Right Ear							
.5	1	2	3	4	6	8	5	1	2	3	4	6	8
Low tones						High tones		Low tones		High tones			

Name _____ Test Date _____

HT Provider

Explanation of results provided

Fit test of hearing protection done

Requirement to wear HP discussed

Keep this card to show at your next test in **one** year.

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