Purpose

The purpose of this standard is to establish the minimum requirements for the selection, use, inspection, maintenance, and replacement of hearing protection at Algonquin College. This standard shall be read in conjunction with the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Program **PPE-01.**

Requirements

General

- Workers shall wear appropriate hearing protection whenever a hazard assessment identifies a risk of hazardous noise exposure.
- Hearing protection shall be selected based on the level and duration of noise exposure and the work being performed.
- Hearing protection shall be worn for the entire duration of the noise exposure.

Selection

- Hearing protection shall be selected in accordance with the current edition of *CSA Z94.2 – Hearing Protection Devices – Performance, Selection, Care and Use*.
- Selection shall consider:
    - Noise exposure levels
    - Duration of exposure
    - Compatibility with other required PPE
    - Worker fit and comfort
    - Manufacturer recommendations
- Where noise assessments have been completed, hearing protection shall provide an appropriate level of attenuation without overprotecting the worker.

Types

Appropriate hearing protection may include:

- Disposable earplugs
- Reusable earplugs
- Earmuffs

- Helmet-mounted earmuffs compatible with protective headwear
- Dual hearing protection (earplugs and earmuffs) where required by the hazard assessment

When hearing protection is worn with other PPE, all equipment shall be compatible and shall not reduce the effectiveness of either device.

Use, Inspection, and Care

- Hearing protection shall be inspected before each use.
- Reusable hearing protection shall be cleaned and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- Disposable hearing protection shall be discarded after use or when it becomes damaged or contaminated.
- Damaged, worn, or defective hearing protection shall be replaced immediately.
- Workers shall ensure hearing protection is properly fitted before entering a hazardous noise area.

Noise Exposure Controls

- Engineering and administrative controls shall be considered before relying on hearing protection, in accordance with the College's PPE Program and the hierarchy of controls.
- Hearing protection shall not be used as a substitute for feasible noise reduction measures.
- Noise assessments shall be conducted where required to determine the appropriate level of hearing protection.

References

- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Regulation 851 – Industrial Establishments
- CSA Z94.2 – Hearing Protection Devices
- CSA Z107.56 – Procedures for the Measurement of Occupational Noise Exposure
- PPE Program (PPE-01)
- Applicable Safety Data Sheets (SDSs)

Related Documents

- PPE Program (PPE-01)

- Hazard Assessment Procedure
- Incident Reporting Procedure