

Buechel Fire Protection District

SAFETY POLICIES

SP-0016

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Title: Hearing Conservation

Approval Date – 7-15-1999

Section	Instruction
1.	<p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>Most people are exposed to noise both at home and at work. At high levels noise can cause permanent hearing loss. The purpose of the Hearing Conservation Program is to insure that firefighters do not experience hearing losses from workplace noise and to encourage firefighters to protect their hearing from non-occupational noise.</p>
2.	<p><u>Scope</u></p> <p>All firefighters who are exposed to noise about 85 dBA for an eight hour time weighted average (TWA) will be included in the program.</p>
3.	<p><u>Requirements</u></p> <p>A. Work Place Monitoring</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Firefighters whose noise exposures equal or exceed 85 dBA for an 8 hour time weighted average (TWA) will be included in the program.2. Areas where the noise levels exceed 85 dBA will be posted. In these areas hearing protection will be provided and its use will be required. <p>B. Audiometric Testing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. All Firefighters will be provided a baseline hearing test (audiogram).2. Firefighters with noise exposures at or above 85 dBA (TWA) will be provided with an annual audiometric test. <p>C. Control Measures in areas at or Above 85 dBA.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Where feasible, engineering controls such as noise barriers and insulation will be installed to reduce firefighter exposures to below 85 dBA (TWA).2. Where engineering controls are not feasible, personnel protective equipment will be worn by all firefighter. <p>D. Protective Equipment.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Two types of protective equipment will be made available, they are:<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Foam plug inserts.b. Earmuffs worn over the ear. (Both types of hearing protection are located in maintenance room)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2. For extremely noisy operations, a combination of plug inserts and earmuffs provide the best protection. E. Training.<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Annual training will be provided for firefighters in the program. The training will include the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. OSHA Noise Standard.b. Use and care of hearing protection including proper fitting.c. Effects of noise on hearing. 2. Training will also be provided to firefighters during recruit training program. F. Program Administration.<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. The training department will be responsible for the Hearing Conservation Program.2. The program will be reviewed annually, by the training bureau, to determine effectiveness.3. The following documentation will be kept:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Dates and attendance of training sessions.b. Audiometric test results. (Will be kept with districts' physician.)c. Audiometric test results will be kept for the duration of employment or membership plus 30 years.