

	Hearing Conservation	Effective:	February 24, 2006
		Originator	Dr. James Q. Robinson
		Last Updated:	February 24, 2006
		Updated by:	Dr. James Q. Robinson

1. Purpose:

This policy is to set forth Ross University’s efforts and responsibilities to safeguard employee, student and visitor hearing while they are on campus.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to all faculty and staff of the Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine.

3. Procedure

3.1. All Ross University departmental supervisors will give consideration to the noise levels produced by their various operations and take steps to safeguard employees, students and visitors hearing while they are on campus.

3.2. Departmental supervisors are responsible for:

3.2.1. Filing notice with the Ross University Safety & Security Dept. of routine or anticipated functions that will require hearing protection, and a list of individuals, positions or populations that will be involved in or at risk exposed to these functions.

3.2.2. Providing employees and involved or risk-exposed students and visitors with hearing protective equipment relevant to the risk to which said persons will be exposed

3.2.3. Enforcing the use of hearing protective equipment within their departments according to said notices filed

3.3. Ross University Safety & Security Dept. will be responsible to the Administrator for ensuring that departments are operating in accordance with this policy.

4. Discussion of Hearing Risk

Noise survey and evaluation is mandated under Cal-OSHA regulations (8 CCR 5096 and 5097). These regulations require employers to monitor noise exposure levels in a manner that will accurately identify employees who are exposed to noise at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels (dBA). In order to comply with Cal-OSHA regulations, UC Davis requires employees exposed at or

above a time weighted average of 85 dBA to participate in the Hearing Conservation and Medical Surveillance Program. This program includes an annual audiogram examination and evaluation provided by Employee Health. The Program also provides annual hearing protection training and requires hearing protection be used by employees. Additionally, Cal-OSHA regulates the exposure time of employees for noise levels between 90-115 dBA.

EH&S recommends hearing protection (earplugs, muffs, etc.) be made available to employees for use at their discretion for areas above 80 dBA, and strongly recommends hearing protection be used in all areas above 85 dBA. At levels exceeding 90 dBA, steps must be taken to reduce the level of noise exposure to employees.

So, how loud is loud? The following is a list of various sounds, their decibel levels and the Cal-OSHA recommended exposure time to each.

SOUND DECIBEL LEVEL	(dBA)	TIME PERMITTED
Rustling leaves	20	No limit
Whispering	25	No limit
Library	30	No limit
Refrigerator	45	No limit
Average home	50	No limit
Normal conversation	60	No limit
Clothes dryer	60	No limit
Washing machine	65	No limit
Dishwasher	65	No limit
Car	70	No limit
Vacuum cleaner	70	No limit
Mixer	70	No limit
Electric sewing machine	70	No limit
Busy traffic	75	No limit
Mini-bike	80	No limit
Alarm clock	80	No limit
Noisy restaurant	80	No limit
Office tabulator	80	No limit
Outboard motor	80	No limit
Passing snowmobile	80	No limit
Average factory	85	16 hours
Electric shaver	85	16 hours
Screaming child	90	8 hours
Passing motorcycle	90	8 hours
Convertible ride on freeway	95	4 hours

Subway train	100	2 hours
Diesel truck	100	2 hours
Woodworking shop	100	2 hours
Pneumatic drill	100	2 hours
Boiler shop	100	2 hours
Jackhammer	100	2 hours
Helicopter	105	1 hour
Power mower	105	1 hour
Snowmobile (drivers seat)	110	30 minutes
Inboard motor	110	30 minutes
Sandblasting	110	30 minutes
Live rock music	90-130	8-0. 3 hours
Auto horn	120	7.5 minutes
Propeller aircraft	120	7.5 minutes
Air raid siren	130	3.75 minutes
THRESHHOLD OF PAIN	140	Danger Level
Gunshot	140	Danger Level
Jet engine	140	Danger Level
Rocket launching	180	Danger Level

Source: Better Hearing Institute, 1998, *Your Guide to Better Hearing*, Washington, D.C.