

## SUBJECT/TITLE

Hearing Conservation Program

### 1.0 PURPOSE/SCOPE

Key Technology, Inc. is committed to the safety and well-being of employees working in our facilities. Key is aware of the risk of hearing loss due to exposure to certain noise levels. In compliance with the Washington State General Industry Hearing Conservation, covered under the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) Chapter 296-817 "Hearing Loss Prevention (Noise)," Key's hearing conservation program has been created.

This policy applies to all employees, visitors, and outside contractors of Key. For the purpose of this policy, visitors and outside contractors will be defined as any person or persons working in a noise area that does not normally work there.

Key may modify its hearing conservation program at any time in order to comply with any changes in the law.

### 2.0 POLICY

It is the policy of Key Technology to protect its employees from hearing loss risk through the use of hearing protection devices, training, monitoring of noise exposure, testing employees' hearing, and maintaining a hearing loss prevention program.

The Safety Officer is responsible for establishing and maintaining the Hearing Conservation Program at Key Technology, Inc. and will evaluate hearing protection for the work areas in which protection will be used. The Safety Officer is also responsible for maintaining program records consistent with applicable regulations.

### 3.0 DETAILS OF POLICY

3.1 Based on noise level test reports, recommendations from department supervisors, managers, and the Safety Committee, the Safety Officer has determined designated "noise areas" where hearing protection is required. A noise area is an area where an employee may be exposed to noise at or above an 8 hour time weighted average of 85 decibels.

3.1.1 Departments designated as noise areas at the Avery facility are:

- Crating

- Fabrication
- Weld

3.1.2 Hearing protection is optional in the Stockroom, Electronics, and Systems Assembly, unless otherwise notified.

Note: Employees traveling from an optional area into a noise area are required to wear hearing protection.

3.1.3 Employees who may be exposed to noise areas will be identified for inclusion in the hearing monitoring program. (Refer to Section 3.3)

3.2 The Safety Officer will evaluate hearing protection for the specific noise environments in which the protectors will be used. Earplugs and/or earmuffs are available to employees at no cost through the stockroom. Custom molded earplugs are also available. Contact the Safety Officer for details. (Refer to Procedure COR 3-05.)

### 3.3 Hearing Monitoring Program

3.3.1 Annual audiometric testing performed by a certified audiologist will be provided for employees exposed to designated noise areas. The Safety Officer will schedule the testing, maintain and monitor test results, and provide any training required on the use and care of hearing protection.

3.3.2 Within 6 months of an employee's first exposure at or above the action level, a valid baseline audiogram will be established against which future audiograms can be compared. When a mobile van is used, the baseline will be established within 1 yr.

3.3.3 Employees will be notified that hearing tests should be preceded by at least 14 hours without exposure to workplace noise. Employees may use hearing protection to meet the requirement.

3.3.4 At least annually after obtaining the baseline audiogram, the employer will obtain a new audiogram for each employee exposed at or above an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels. If a comparison of the annual audiogram to the baseline audiogram indicates a standard threshold shift, the

employee will be informed of this fact in writing, as required by regulation.

If a threshold shift has occurred, use of hearing protection will be re-evaluated and/or refitted and if necessary a medical evaluation may be required.

- 3.4 Supervisors and managers within designated noise areas are expected to audit compliance of this policy and to report violations to the Safety Officer. Employees in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 3.5 Key will use feasible controls to reduce employee noise exposure, wherever exposure equals or exceeds an 8 hour time-weighted avg. of 90 decibels.
- 3.6 A training program will be provided for all employees who are exposed to action level noise at least annually. Employees will be properly trained in the use, care & fitting of protectors. Training will be updated consistent to changes in PPE and work processes. The employer will make available to affected employees copies of the noise exposure procedures and will also post a copy in the workplace. Key will maintain a written program describing the initial and refresher training.
- 3.7 Key will post "high noise – hearing protection required" at all work areas where employees may be exposed to noise that equals or exceeds 115 decibels.
- 3.8 The Safety Officer, on behalf of Key, strongly recommends that hearing protection be worn by any Key employee working and/or visiting customer plants. Key employees are also expected to comply with any established regulations regarding hearing conservation while at customer facilities.

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Revision History  
(describes major policy changes)

Rev 09/10/04

- Policy updated and re-formatted to Company standard
- Revised policy language to reflect broader and more specific guidelines

Rev 06/11/07

- Changed policy number from Policy No. 3-40 to Policy No. 7-05
- Changed reference from Procedure COR 13-05 to Procedure COR 3-05

Rev 06/15/07

- Deleted section related to Melrose
- Updated the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) standard number

Rev 04/08/15

- Complete update of policy to comply with current practices