1. Preamble

Prolonged or excessive exposure to sound, especially in an industrial or trades setting, causes an increased risk of permanent damage to the hearing of Workers. Red River College wishes to address this activity in order to further minimize the risk of injury to its Workers.

2. Policy

Red River College is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all members of the College community. Recognizing that excessive exposure to sound (noise) can produce noise-induced permanent hearing loss, the College and Workers shall adhere to the following steps to reduce Worker exposure to hazardous noise levels:

- take appropriate measures to suppress noise to approved levels;
- isolate Workers from noise in the Workplace;
- control exposure of Workers to high noise levels; and
- operate a hearing conservation program with appropriate Worker participation.

Adherence to this policy ensures compliance with Manitoba Regulation 217/2006 - Part 12 – Hearing Conservation and Noise Control.

3. Definitions

3.1 “Student” – means any person undergoing College sanctioned training or serving an apprenticeship or field placement at a facility that is occupied or approved by the College.

3.2 “Supervisor” - means a person who has charge of a workplace or direct authority over a Worker. This includes instructors who are in charge of Students.

3.3 “Worker” includes

(a) any person who is in an employment relationship with the College;
(b) any person who is employed by any other employer to perform a service whether for gain or reward, or hope of gain or reward or not,
(c) any person engaged by another person to perform services, whether under a contract of employment or not

(i) who performs work or services for another person on College premises for compensation or reward on such terms and conditions that he is, in relation to that person, in a position of economic dependence upon that person more closely resembling the relationship of any employee than that of an independent contractor, and

(ii) who works or performs services in a workplace,

(d) a Student.

3.4 “Workplace” - means any College-occupied building, site, workshop, structure, mine, mobile vehicle, or any other premises or location whether indoors or outdoors in which one or more workers, or self-employed persons, are engaged in work or have worked.

4. Procedures

4.1 Workers who are required to work in an area where the equivalent sound level exposure may exceed 80 dBA must participate in the College’s hearing conservation program, as outlined in this policy, and may be required to participate in periodic noise exposure assessment. For the purposes of this policy, any area where the sound level may exceed 80 dBA shall be deemed to be a “high risk sound level area”.

4.2 Where Workers are required to work in areas where the equivalent sound level exposure may exceed the maximum permissible 85 dBA, one or more of the following steps shall be taken:

(a) The Worker will be isolated from the noise;

(b) The College shall take appropriate measures to suppress the noise to approved levels;

(c) The College shall institute other appropriate control measures to limit Worker’s exposure to high noise levels.

4.3 Appropriate measures taken by the College to prevent noise-induced hearing loss may include:

(a) Engineering controls (maintaining or modifying equipment to reduce noise emissions at the source or enclose the source or the Worker);

(b) Administrative controls (reducing the time Workers spend in noisy areas, reduce the number of exposed Workers or provide quiet periods by modifying work cycles);

(c) Personal Hearing Protection (Mandatory use of appropriate hearing protection which effectively reduces the amount of sound energy reaching the ear drum of a Worker).

4.4 Warning signs shall be conspicuously posted by the College at the entrances to any work area where sound levels exceed or may exceed the 85 dBA maximum noise exposure limit. Warning signs that specify the use of hearing protection while operating specified equipment shall be displayed in a conspicuous location on or near all equipment that generates noise which may exceed 80 dBA.
4.5 In addition to the foregoing, the College and its Workers will comply with the requirements listed in the table below. Where sound exposure levels fall within those specified in Column A, the actions specified in Column B will be undertaken. (NOTE: $L_{ex} = 8$ hour equivalent exposure).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A ($L_{ex}$)</th>
<th>Column B</th>
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| 80-85 dBA           | 1 - consult with the applicable Workplace Safety & Health Committee or representative  
|                     | 2 - monitor noise levels and Worker exposures  
|                     | 3 - mandatory Worker education regarding the hazards of noise exposure  
|                     | 4 - annual audiometric testing for College Workers  
|                     | 5 - provide hearing protection at Worker’s request |
| >85dBA              | 1 - 4 as above  
|                     | 5 - mandatory use of hearing protection. Enforcement by Supervisors of the use of hearing protection. |

5. Responsibilities

5.1 The College’s Environmental Health and Safety Service (“EHSS”) shall oversee a hearing conservation program consisting of:
(a) mandatory education and training for all Workers with potential exposure to noise levels in excess of 80 dBA;
(b) the monitoring of noise levels of machinery and or processes and Worker exposure to Noise;
(c) the posting of noise levels on source machinery or near noisy work processes;
(d) recommend engineering and/or work practice controls to reduce exposure to 85 dBA or lower where reasonably practicable;
(e) audiometric testing, evaluation and follow-up;
(f) the provision of hearing protection devices for Workers as required by legislation and other provisions of this policy;
(g) required record keeping and submission of an annual report to Manitoba Labour.

EHSS shall schedule all audiometric testing for Workers in high risk sound level areas. Any area where one could expect to be exposed to noise levels in excess of 80 dBA will be designated as a high risk sound level area. For a list of high risk sound level areas, see the attached Schedule A.

EHSS shall determine which Workers are working in “high risk sound level areas”. In situations where job duties are significantly changed and the responsible Supervisor concludes that there is no longer a potential for exposure to hazardous noise levels, the changes will be verified and documented by the Supervisor of the affected Workers and the new job duties will be assessed by EHSS. If overall noise exposures in the new duties are assessed to be below those levels considered hazardous, and the affected Workers submit themselves to three subsequent annual audiometric assessments with no shift in hearing ability, then the positions will be removed from the “high risk sound level area” list.
EHSS will monitor sound levels to determine where noise level warning signage should be posted. EHSS will provide sound level testing for all new machines or work processes introduced to the College, upon being contacted by the Supervisor responsible for the program or area involved.

5.2 Supervisors are required to review each workplace under his/her control to identify circumstances where individuals may be exposed to unsafe noise levels. Supervisors must ensure that all reasonably practical steps are taken to protect the safety and health of those Workers. Where the Supervisor has a reasonable concern about noise levels, the Supervisor shall contact EHSS.

Supervisors will determine, in cooperation with the applicable Joint Workplace Safety & Health Committee and EHSS, the sound levels in those areas where the Workers are required to perform work operations. If sound levels at the location exceed, or could possibly exceed, 85 dBA, the Supervisor will implement control measures to reduce Worker exposure to excessive noise levels. Where such control measures are insufficient or not practicable, the Supervisor will provide appropriate hearing protective devices to Workers as required, and instruct the Workers on the procedures and proper use of hearing protection devices.

For greater certainty, it is mandatory for Supervisors to provide and enforce the use of appropriate hearing protection devices where noise levels exceed 85 dBA and where noise levels cannot be otherwise reduced through isolation of the Worker or the source of the noise.

Supervisors shall post noise levels on source machinery or near noisy work processes, as required by the College’s hearing conservation program.

Supervisors shall contact EHSS to arrange sound level testing of all new machines or work processes introduced to the College.

Supervisors will be responsible for the provision of appropriate hearing protection to visitors prior to entering posted areas.

Supervisors shall be responsible for ensuring that warning signage supplied by EHSS remains posted in conspicuous areas.

5.3 Workers must identify to their Supervisor any potential situations where they foresee exposure to unsafe noise levels. Workers must wear hearing protection as directed by their Supervisor and must submit to all other hearing protection procedures mandated by their Supervisor. Newly hired College employees hired to perform duties within areas identified by the College as “high risk sound level areas” will be required to undergo audiometric baseline hearing testing within 70 days of the employment start date, and annually thereafter.

5.4 Human Resource Services will advise EHSS and the Health Centre of all new College employees who will perform duties in high risk sound level areas.

5.5 The Health Centre will contact Supervisors to set up audiometric baseline
testing dates for newly hired College Workers in high risk sound level areas, and shall provide periodic testing, evaluation and follow-up of all Workers employed in high risk sound level areas, as required by the College’s hearing conservation program.

The Health Centre shall assist in providing mandatory education and training for all Workers with exposure to noise levels in excess of 80 dBA, as contemplated by the College’s hearing conservation program. A certified Audiometric Technician (Health Centre or EHSS) will consult with employees who are registered in the Hearing Conservation Program and experience a shift in hearing ability as indicated in the annual report. Prevention strategies will also be discussed in the presence of the Worker’s Supervisor.

The Health Centre shall keep and submit such records to the Manitoba Department of Labour, as required by law.

6. Enforcement

6.1 College employees who violate this or other safety related policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

6.2 Students who violate this or other safety related policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Related Policy and Legislation

Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act C.C.S.M. c. W210
Part 12 of the Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Regulation W217/2006
Manitoba Government and General Employees’ Union Collective Agreement

2.0 Global Executive Limitation – Executive Limitation Board of Governors Policy Manual

E1 Safety
E6 Hazardous Waste Management
E7 Personal Protective Equipment
E10 Use of Equipment for Personal Use
E11 Reporting of Accidents and Serious Incidents
E12 Working Alone
U1 Use of College Facilities
Appendix A
RED RIVER COLLEGE
“HIGH-RISK SOUND LEVEL AREAS”

*Manitoba Regulation 217/2006* - Part 12 – Hearing Conservation and Noise Control, employers are to identify high-risk noise areas within their workplace and develop a hearing conservation program for all workers within these areas who may be exposed to a sound exposure level greater than 80 dBA. In the College, these areas have been identified and are listed below.

**Construction**

- Carpenter and Woodworking
- Landscape Technician
- Plumbing/Gas Fitting
- Construction Electrician
- Masonry
- Refrigeration & Air Conditioning
- Interior Systems - Lather
- Paint and Decorating
- Roofing
- Sheet Metal
- Sprinkler Fitting
- Steam Fitting

**Civil Engineering Technology**
- Greenspace Management

**Mechanical, Manufacturing and Communications**

- Advanced Technology
- Mechanical Technology
- Power Engineering
- Aerospace Manufacturing
- Manufacturing Engineering Technology

**Transportation Heavy Apprenticeship Trades**
- Automotive
- Boilermaker
- Collision Refinishing and Repair
- Heavy Duty Equipment
- Ironworkers
- Outdoor Power Equipment
- Welding
- Rail Car Conductor
- Diesel Mechanics
Mathematics and Science
  • All areas

Facility Management
  • Carpenter
  • Pavement and Grounds

Print and Graphic
  • All areas

Stevenson Aviation and Aerospace Training Centre
  • All Winnipeg/Southport programs/areas
    (Aerospace Mfg., CEI Aviation Program Expansion, Gas Turbine, Projects 762)

Teacher Education
  • Trades programs/areas

Continuing Education
  • All programs/areas with similar training and activities to those listed above.

Note: This list is subject to change and will be reviewed annually by Environmental Health and Safety Services and changes may be made as requested by Supervisors.