NOISE SURVEY REPORT

EXAMPLE COMPANY PROCESSING PLANT

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1. Scope

Mr. CD Manager, Example Company, requested a noise survey be carried out at the Processing Plant. This survey was completed on May 7 2014 Greg Beadle, Premier Safety and Environmental consultant conducted the survey in consultation with Mr. CD, Mr. SM and various other staff members.

The objective of the survey was to:

- Measure noise levels on-site
- Identify systems of work and areas where exposure is likely to exceed the Standard
- Identify plant and equipment that is currently used that has the potential to cause excessive noise exposures, and
- Determine any actions required to ensure exposure to noise is controlled to enable an elimination if possible or a reduction in the likelihood of employees suffering from hearing loss as a result of excessive noise exposure

2. Survey

Management and Operators were consulted during the noise survey to ensure that the conditions in which the survey was being conducted represented normal operating conditions. Operators were asked about high noise sources and were briefed on the noise survey process.
Once the results are shared with the employees, priorities for reducing noise reduction should be done in consultation with employees and Health and Safety Representatives.

Equipment and Measurement method

Noise levels were measured with a 3M SD – 200 Class 2 Sound Level Meter with built in integrating averaging. The meter has been calibrated on the day of manufacture and is recommended that it be recalibrated annually.
Continuous equivalent decibel readings using "A" weighting scale were taken in slow response mode. Time periods were selected to ensure that a representative sample of noise was included in the measurement.

No dosimetry readings were taken as part of this noise survey.

Operating conditions and variables

- On the day of the noise survey noise levels were described as being normal.
- Measurements were taken at normal operating conditions with continuous operation of the equipment. Hearing protection areas were defined at equivalent continuous levels of 85 dB (A).
- Hearing protection being used varied from approved ear muffs or ear plugs of varying age and condition

3. Noise Exposure Standard

Current Victorian OHS Regulations 2007 Part 3.2 Noise requires that no employee is exposed to noise that exceeds the noise exposure standard. The standard currently requires the identification of noise where the exposure exceeds the 8 hour equivalent continuous sound pressure level of 85 dB (A).
Employees work from 7.00 am to 4.00 pm 5 days per week. Maintenance and other operators are required to work overtime for urgent and periodic maintenance.

4. Noise Levels

This table shows dB(A) and peak levels (where measured) and locations

Equipment /Location	Leq(AV) dB(A)	Peak dB(A)
1. Entry door to warehouse	76	84.7
2.Opening at first warehouse roller door	75.5	85.7
3.Balance area	87.5	96.1
4.Quarantine area	83.9	89.7
5. Opening at second warehouse roller door	78.8	83.2
6. Moulder in operation at control panel	94.6	101.2
7. Moulder in operation west pack end	89.8	95.6
8. Moulder running only at control panel	89.6	92.4
9. Grinder room door entry with moulder in operation	102.6	105.5
10. Rear warehouse entry door (west)	85.1	95.5
11. Maintenance workshop inside entry door (Grinding operation)	84.1	92.3
12. Grinder room door closed radio on	85.2	88.2
13.Grinder room door closed radio off	84.7	87.2
14.Grading table north work station	90.4	100.2
15.Grading table south work station	91.0	102.8
16.Dimter	94.7	100.4
17.Packing trolley area with moulder not in operation	79.5	90.2
18.Packing trolley station 2 moulder in operation	85.2	90.7
19. Packing trolley station 4 (closest to Dimter) moulder in operation	86.4	96
20.Docker in operation	96	103.1
21. Chainsaw operation moulder in feed end	95.9	107.1
22. End matcher south workstation	85.0	98.5
23. End matcher north workstation	86.6	98.2
24.Hopper south side	69.4	76.0
25. Hopper north side	73.1	81.4
26.Gas control room	81.5	87.8
27. Kiln room (5 & 6 control) door open	85.0	86.3
28. Kiln room (5 & 6 control) door closed	86.5	90.1
29. Kiln room (3 & 4)	64.0	76.8
30.Oven room	64.0	81.8
31.Oven room with docking saw in operation		105

5. Excessive Noise Levels and Exposures

The survey indicates that under normal operating conditions, noise exposure in most operational areas exceeds the Standard. This will occur in all areas of the processing area.
The area bound by the moulder greatly exceeds the exposure standard where readings well in excess of 100dBA were taken. This includes the moulder grinder room, and the area where employees are required to feed timber into the moulder. Operators on the grading table are also exposed to noise levels exceeding 100dBA.

In the oven room an employee is required to operate a docking saw. This requires timber to be cut into small slivers for analysis and measurement of moisture content. During the survey it was found that there were no noise controls in place i.e. no hearing protection/barriers/isolation of operator etc.
Testing of the noise levels emitted during operation produced results of 105dBA.

6. Noise Control Use and other Requirements

Hearing protection devices are provided, where there use is compulsory and enforced. PPE requirements including the use of hearing protection devices is also reinforced by the use of signage. On inspection some PPE was in poor condition. There was a mixture of use of ear muffs and ear plugs. In one case an employee was not using any hearing protection.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the following measures be applied where reasonably practicable:

- Ensuring that the compulsory wearing of hearing protection devices is enforced. This is to apply to all that enter the processing areas
- Ensure hearing protection devices are readily available for all employees and visitors
- Provide additional warning signage in appropriate locations- for example balance area, door entry at all locations, kiln room and oven room
- Relocate the ear plug dispenser to a position outside of the entry to warehouse. Noise levels recorded inside the entry reached a peak of 84.7 dBA and at the first warehouse door 85.7dBA.
- Ensure regular maintenance of equipment to ensure optimum operating performance
- Purchasing protocols to include a requirement to purchase equipment that emits low noise levels
- Ensure all hearing protection warning signs are kept visible and are maintained in good condition

- All hearing protection devices are to provide protection to below the Standard 85 dB(A)
- All workers to be provided with appropriate training to ensure that users understand correct fitting, use, maintenance of hearing protection devices
- Training to provide information on the health effects of exposure or continued exposure of excessive noise levels
- Provide audiometric testing to all workers as required under the current Regulation
- All testing results must be made available to all workers and results kept on site for as long as is required

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