

**INDUSTRIAL HEARING
TESTING**

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Worcester, MA 01609

508-752-4663



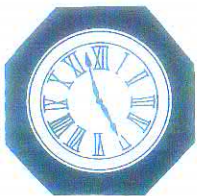
Issue 2

**HAVE YOU
HEARD**

**about all of the other
services available at
IHT????**

*Hearing Conservation
Products & Services*

- Noise Surveys
- Customized
Employee
Training Sessions
- Hearing Protection
- Audiometer Sales
- Equipment
Calibration
- Recordkeeping
Software
- Posters & Support
Literature
- Audiological
Referrals



Office Hours

Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 4:30 PM
Closed weekends
Tel. (508) 752-4663

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

It's me again, the "PR" spokesperson for IHT, bringing you loads of Happy New Year wishes. O.K. It's time to put away those ornaments, take down the holiday decorations, and GET BACK TO WORK! By the time you read this, I will just be returning from the wilds of Africa (I hope)! Perhaps I'll have a good story or two when we meet again!

What's new with your safety programs this year? Any good ideas that we could swap around? Things that have worked, things that may have failed? Well, I have an idea about this and it involves networking and a new column I'm trying to develop in our newsletter.

I would like to hear from our clients, large and small alike, about safety issues pertaining to the hearing conservation program you run at your facility. For example, how do you as a company enforce the use of hearing protection devices (HPDs), or any personal protection device (PPD) for that matter? We have heard a wide variation of ideas from those who gently coax and counsel their employees, reward them somehow, or to the more difficult programs that need to enforce protection with a more firm "policy of employment" approach. How do you keep your records? Do you have a union that needs some feedback or additional educational information to let the employees know we're all trying to protect their hearing? Let's hear from you about your personal experiences and how we can all make hearing conservation a proactive thought for everyone year round!

I have included the "our face to a name" section since it was so well received last time. It may help you identify who you wish to talk with at our offices on a certain subject. Some of us have expanded our duties from last printing, so check the job listings to see how we may help you.

Be sure to check out the column on "What's New." We are very excited about some of the improvements we have designed for implementation in '96. I also hope you'll notice the "Did You Know" column, as you might find a tidbit to take advantage of that you didn't know we offered! As always, the whole Hengen family and staff thank you for your continued business. If there is anything we may assist you with for your programs, please don't hesitate to call. Read on!

ANDI HENGEN

*You may be disappointed if you fail,
but you are doomed if you don't try.*

WHEN DO YOU NEED TO IMPLEMENT HEARING PROTECTION?

First, we should talk about Permissible Exposure Levels (PELs). PELs are determined by ACGIH and NIOSH. Those are the American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. From their studies, OSHA usually adapts their recommendations into the corresponding Code of Federal Regulations (CFR). Then action levels are determined, which are usually 50% of the PEL, at which you must initiate some type of program for your employees. The PEL in contrast, is the maximum exposure that you may subject your workers to without mandating the use of some protection. In the case of hearing conservation programs, the action level is 85dB TWA (time weighted average). The PEL is 90 dB TWA for the **general population** at which hearing protection must be worn.

Our policy, though, is to strongly encourage our clients to establish **mandatory use of hearing protection at 85dB instead of 90dB**. This is because there are several exceptions in the law, and a couple of important reasons.

1. Mobile Test Van Exception

New hires, or people new to the program, must have a baseline audiogram completed on them within 6 months from date of hire. However, written into CFR 1910.95 is the “mobile test van exception” (see paragraph g,5,ii). This exception allows the employer to wait an additional six months for baseline testing, providing that the employee **wears HPDs at 85dB TWA for the second six months of employment** instead of 90dB TWA.

2. Standard Threshold Shift (STS) Exception

Another exception is for STS candidates. When testing has been completed, you may have a few people who have experienced an STS, or a change for the worse in their hearing. This can be for the first or second (persistent threshold shift) time. In this instance you must be enforcing HPDs for these people at 85 again instead of 90. If their shift is confirmed, they are required to wear HPDs at 85 instead of 90dB forever more. If they return to their “normal” baseline range, they can be treated back with the average population.

3. Greater Protection of Workforce and the “5dB Doubling Effect”

Variation of sound energy is **not based** on a simple, additive scale. For every increase of 5 decibels, there is actually a doubling of sound known as the “5dB doubling effect.” Applying this theory to the PEL debate, if you lower the PEL from 90dB to 85dB, you are actually **halving** your employee’s exposure. Remember too, the effect of noise upon an individual is very personal. Genetics, hobbies, work habits, proper use of HPDs all have a varied effect on the individual, and how noise may affect their hearing. By lowering the exposure level to the group as a whole, you are taking a more conservative approach, but certainly a safer one. Remember too, that OSHA regulations are the bare minimum. It will certainly pay off to take the required precautions a step further to help protect your employee’s hearing from noise induced hearing loss.

Fourth and finally, an 85dB PEL will make your life and work easier. From an administrative point of view, if all employees are required to wear HPDs at the same level of 85dB, confusion will be eliminated. You’ll need not differentiate among workers for hearing protection policy, no matter what their job category and status may be. Ultimately, you will be more successful at keeping someone’s quality of life intact, and saving people’s hearing!

Words of wisdom...

An executive who passed a mental hospital on his way to work used to stop every once in a while to watch one of the inmates going through the motions of winding up and pitching an imaginary ball. A friend asked the executive what he found so interesting about the man’s performance.

“Well,” said the executive, “if things keep going the way they are, I’ll be there some day catching for that guy, and I want to get on to his curves.”

AND NOW HEAR YE HEAR YE HONOR ROLL

(a drum roll was kind of hard to create on paper!)

In hopes of giving recognition to some of our clients who have helped us get to the place we are now, I decided to list some of these “old-timers” in a new column. You may refer to them if you are just starting a program, or simply want to know who’s who out there. If you’re listed here, you have been running a quality hearing conservation program with us for 10 consecutive years or more. We would like to thank you all for your commitment to hearing conservation and employee health, and honor you with a plaque expressing this gratitude. (You should be hearing from us soon.) If you’re not quite a 10 year veteran yet, keep the flame burning!

The Gold Club membership goes to:

A & W Metal Fabricators Inc.

Ben Beauregard
Southbridge, MA

John M. Dean, Inc.

Bob Main
Putnam, CT

Leicester Die & Tool Inc.

Jim Trinqu
Leicester, MA

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Basque Plastics

Cliff Basque
Leominster, MA

Ken’s Foods

Peter Colding
Marlboro, MA

Plastican

Cindy Mohan
Leominster, MA

Carlstrom Pressed Metals

Beverly Lees
Westboro, MA

Quabaug Corporation

Jim Barkoskie
No. Brookfield, MA

There’s nothing like self confidence.

Larry King tells this story about baseball great Ty Cobb. When Cobb was seventy, a reporter asked him, “What do you think you’d hit if you were playing these days?” Cobb, who was a lifetime .367 hitter, said “About .290, maybe .300.”

The reporter said, “That’s because of the travel, the night games, the artificial turf, and all the new pitches like the slider, right?”

“No,” said Cobb, “it’s because I’m seventy.”

A young girl who is destined to succeed:

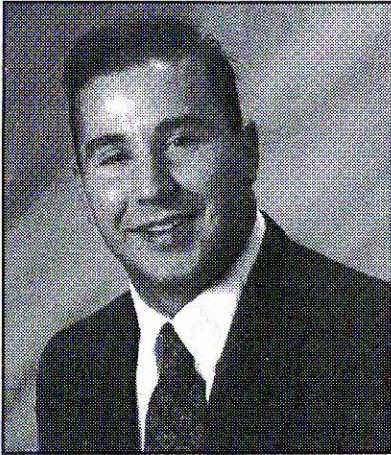
She visited a farm one day and wanted to buy a large watermelon. “That’s three dollars,” said the farmer. “I’ve only got 30 cents,” said the young girl.

The farmer pointed to a very small watermelon in the field and said “How about that one?”

“Okay, I’ll take it,” said the little girl. “But leave it on the vine, I’ll be back for it in a month.”

MEET OUR P.O.S. TEAM

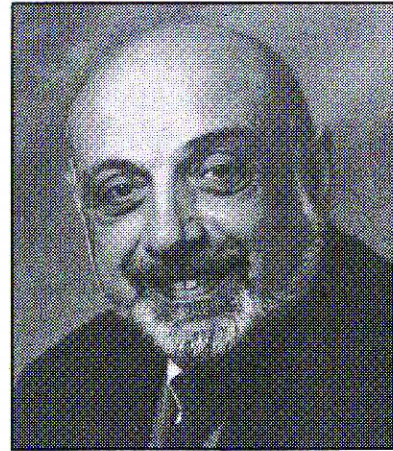
(Positively Outrageous Satisfaction and always accessible)



Field Engineer - Steve A. Yany, B.S.M.E.

- CAOHC Certified
- Audiometric Report Review
- Sound Surveys • Sales

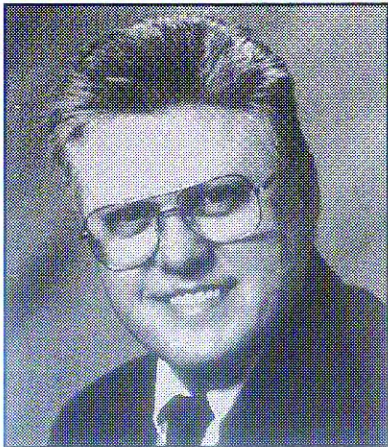
Field Staff



Senior Audiometric Technician

Frank G. DiMinuco, M.S.

- CAOHC Certified



Audiometric Technician - Jim B. Hurley

- CAOHC Certified



Audiometric Technician - Rick A. Harris

- CAOHC Certified

WHAT'S NEW?

A moment of silence please..... Yes, that's right. The 'ol Silver Bullet (in all her glory), is on the way out. She's being retired this quarter. Replacing her is our new Rig #4! As usual, we added and subtracted a few designs from our last rig, and came up with what we are proud to present as another technologically superior 8 person test unit!

That makes our fleet complete with 4 Dodge trucks, 3 test trailers, two 8 person units, one 6 person unit, and a partridge in a pear ... (uh-sorry, I got carried away).

No more paperwork? Well, we're sure going to cut back some! We are working on our '96 program to provide you with a new type of form, eliminating those somewhat tedious labels of the past. We are working on getting all that stuff on one formatted page per person, and you won't have to move those labels around. This will make it even easier to help us update your employee lists since all you'll have to do is return all unused forms to the technician. We'll do the rest.

Finally, the OSHA 200 log listings will be included in the standard format of the report. We have been holding out for the final rule to write our software, but we've decided to go ahead and use the criteria OSHA has pending for confirmation.

DID YOU KNOW?

- that we provide education on the video tapes in several languages?

Portuguese, Spanish and English.

- and did you know, if you would like to provide translation for our forms, we'll have them printed for your test date. I would really love to have some input with Polish, Laotian, Cambodian, etc.

- that we also have medical history questionnaires in those languages too.

- that we have Motorola walkie-talkies on board all the trailers now. Please ask the technician to share them with you. Use them to help communicate with our technicians during the testing, and to help coordinate traffic flow throughout the day!

- that we offer a very reduced rate on a **return visit**? If you have anyone who missed the annual visit from our vans, or people you should retest because of a standard threshold shift (STS), we will be happy to schedule a return visit anytime throughout the year for a great price. It doesn't take many tests to make this a very cost efficient alternative. As a matter of fact, it is already itemized in your contract!

- that if you send out any employees for testing at a local clinic, we can accommodate you with the paper work. If you send us all the accumulated tests during the year from other sources, we will enter these tests into the database, and produce letters to the employees. It is also important that we receive these results so that your employee's records are up to date when we return for the annual testing.

- that we can also help you define the proper criteria for a hearing test at any of those local clinic sources. There are specific guidelines for conducting a hearing test for industry and OSHA compliance. Sometimes we find that a health clinic, etc. is not aware of what type test we need to obtain. Just call our office for help on this.

SALES TALK....

AN EAR PLUG IS AN EAR PLUG IS AN EAR PLUG.....

Right? No Way! By now you should have all received our promotional plug mug. It is a vehicle of information for two purposes. First, stuffed in the mug are our new NOISE STOPPERS!, disposable plugs with some design benefits;

- hypo allergenic material reduces canal irritation & pressure
- closed cell foam - more soil resistant - increased hygiene
- slower expansion for more reliable fit & seal
- bright orange color for easier visibility - improved compliance
- tapered fit for greater comfort



Also on that mug is an important formula used to establish the true effective-

ness of the noise reduction rating (NRR). NIOSH and OSHA say that you **must** assume that NRRs have been obtained under perfect laboratory conditions, which do not exist in the field by the time you introduce the product for

employee use. It is because of this that you must apply the formula we put on the back of those mugs. If you did not receive a mug, want further explanation of this formula, or want to place an order to try NOISE STOPPERS!, please give any of us a call.

WARNING: Do not assume that the NRR is the same for every HPD.

DO NOT SUBTRACT the NRR that is published on packaging from the noise exposure levels without first adjusting NRR according to the formula.

WHAT? SOMETHING FREE?!

Yup, that's right. I've just convinced my dad to get out of the office. Well, I mean, he would leave if I could arrange for him to speak at any professional group meetings you might be involved with (about hearing conservation of course!). Perhaps you caught his act at the last Mass. Safety & Health Conference, or Pratt & Whitney's Federal Safety Council meeting, etc. So give us guys here in the office a break, I mean, we'll give you a break for no charge, and send him your way to speak at any professional group meetings you are involved in. And on a more serious note, we also offer additional educational sessions on-site throughout the year for your employees. For those sessions, we send Dr. Hengen out on request for a nominal fee, and we'd be happy to talk with you further about this. Use this time as a reminder at the 1/2 year mark after testing, or as an addition to the testing or re-testing we might be doing for you.

We offer any other type assistance you may need to promote the effectiveness of your Hearing Conservation Program such as posters, sound surveys, written programs and much more. We can help you customize your program in a meaningful way.

HOORAY FOR NEW YORK!

In August of '95 the "nuisance noise law" was adjusted in New York state. Noise can be no louder than 70dB maximum at 25 feet from source, such as an automobile. This is an adjustment from what had been a max level of 80 decibels at 50 feet. (This would also apply to those deafening car "boom stereos." You know, the ones you can hear inside your car drowning out your own stereo, even with your windows rolled up, sitting at a stop light)

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