



# Weekly Safety Tip

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*Our Weekly Safety Tip provides valuable and current safety information relevant for Work, Home & Play.*

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**Safety Slogan**

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**James Lehrke-SCI**

**Of the week**

## SCI Safety Tip: Hearing Loss Prevention: Monitoring and Testing Requirements

Source: <http://www.blr.com>

Date: January 14, 2014

The OSHA noise exposure standards says that if any employee's exposure equals or exceeds an 8-hour time-weighted average of 85 decibels (dB), which is the "action level," you must develop and implement a noise monitoring program.

- The audiometric sampling strategy for the monitoring program should be designed to identify affected employees and enable proper selection of hearing protectors.
- Instruments used to measure employee noise exposure should be calibrated to ensure accurate measurement.
- When circumstances make area monitoring inappropriate, a representative personal sampling should be used to comply with the monitoring requirements.
- All continuous, intermittent, and impulsive sound levels from 80 to 130 dB should be integrated into the noise measurements.

Monitoring should be repeated whenever a change in production, process, equipment, or controls increases noise exposures to the extent that additional employees may be exposed at or above the action level or the protection provided by hearing protectors may be rendered inadequate to meet requirements.

The standard also requires you to provide affected employees (or their representatives) with an opportunity to observe any noise measurements and notify each employee of the results of the monitoring.

### Audiometric Testing Program

You must make continuous audiometric testing available to all employees whose exposures equal or exceed the action level. Audiometric tests must be performed by a licensed or certified audiologist, otolaryngologist (an ear, nose, and throat specialist), or other physician, or by a technician who is certified by the Council of Accreditation in Occupational Hearing Conservation.

Noncertified technicians with appropriate experience may conduct tests under supervision of a certified tester. A technician who operates microprocessor audiometers does not need to be certified. All audiograms must meet the requirements of 29 CFR 1910.95, Appendix C.

**Baseline Audiogram**

Within 6 months of an employee's first exposure at or above the action level, you must establish a valid baseline audiogram against which subsequent audiograms can be compared.

- When mobile test vans are used to meet the audiometric testing obligation, you must obtain a valid baseline audiogram within 1 year of an employee's first exposure at or above the action level.
- When baseline audiograms are obtained more than 6 months after the employee's first exposure at or above the action level, employees must wear hearing protectors for any period exceeding 6 months after first exposure until the baseline audiogram is obtained.

Testing to establish a baseline audiogram must be preceded by at least 14 hours without exposure to workplace noise. Hearing protectors may be used as a substitute for the requirement that baseline audiograms be preceded by 14 hours without exposure to workplace noise.

**Annual Audiogram**

At least annually after obtaining the baseline audiogram, you must obtain a new audiogram for each employee exposed at or above the action level. Each employee's annual audiogram must be compared with that employee's baseline audiogram to determine if the audiogram is valid and if a standard threshold shift (STS) has occurred.

An audiologist, otolaryngologist, or physician must review problem audiograms and must determine whether there is a need for further evaluation. If a comparison of the annual audiogram with the baseline audiogram indicates an STS has occurred, the employee must be informed of this fact in writing within 21 days of the determination.

An annual audiogram may be substituted for the baseline audiogram when, in the judgment of the audiologist, otolaryngologist, or physician who is evaluating the audiogram:

- The STS revealed by the audiogram is persistent.
- The hearing threshold shown in the annual audiogram indicates significant improvement over the baseline audiogram

**Audiometric Test Recordkeeping**

You must maintain an accurate record of all employee exposure measurements and audiometric test records. Noise exposure measurement records must be retained for 2 years, and audiometric test records must be retained for the duration of the affected employee's employment.

## SCI OSHA Compliance: The Flammable Liquids Standard Defined

Source: <http://www.blr.com>

Date: January 8, 2014

*The purpose of today's Advisor article is to discuss the requirements of the flammable liquids standard in general industry and to better understand how to avoid serious hazards.*

**By Ana Ellington, BLR Legal Editor**

Flammable liquids are present in nearly every workplace. Gasoline, diesel fuel, and many common products like solvents, thinners, cleaners, adhesives, paints, and polishes can be flammable—they are part of our everyday life. However, if these liquids are used or stored improperly, it could present serious hazards that could result in injuries and even death.

The flammable liquids standard (29 CFR 1910.106) was revised in 2012, in response to U.S. OSHA's revising the Hazard Communication standard to incorporate the Globally Harmonized System (GHS).

### SCI Compliance Advisory

**OSHA Posting Required Soon**

*The form must be posted between **Feb. 1** and April 30, 2014. The summary must include the total number of job-related injuries and illnesses that occurred in 2013 and were logged on OSHA Form 300, Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses.*

The standard's title was changed from "Flammable and Combustible Liquids" to "Flammable Liquids." One significant change is that the revised regulation lists liquids as "categories" rather than "classes."

### Defining Flammables

To understand OSHA requirements for the safe storage of flammables, we must define flammable liquid. The flashpoint and boiling point determine the category of a liquid.

OSHA defines a flammable liquid as any liquid having a flashpoint at or below 199.4°F (93°C). Flammable liquids are divided into four categories:

- **Category 1:** Liquids with flashpoints below 73.4°F (23°C) and boiling point at or below 95°F (35°C) (1910.106(a)(19)(i)). Examples: acetaldehyde and ethyl ether.
- **Category 2:** Liquids with flashpoints below 73.4°F (23°C) and boiling points at or above 95°F (35°C) (1910.106(a)(19)(ii)). Examples: acetone, benzene, and toluene.
- **Category 3:** Liquids with flashpoints at or above 73.4°F (23°C) and at or below 140°F (60°C). When a Category 3 liquid with a flashpoint at or above 100°F (37.8°C) is heated for use to within 30°F (16.7°C) of its flashpoint, it must be handled as a Category 3 liquid with a flashpoint below 100°F (37.8°C) (1910.106(a)(19)(iii)).
- **Category 4:** Includes liquids having flashpoints above 140°F (60°C) and at or below 199.4°F (93°C). When a Category 4 flammable liquid is heated for use to within 30°F (16.7°C) of its flashpoint, it must be handled as a Category 3 liquid with a flashpoint at or above 100°F (37.8°C) (1910.106(a)(19)(iv)).

**(Note:** The term combustible liquid is no longer considered a class or category in the revised standard.)  
Whether liquids are Category 1 or 4 is not the only factor you should consider when determining your safe storage needs. You also need to consider ignition temperature, explosive limits (LEL or UEL), vapor pressure, specific gravity, and vapor density if you want to design a truly safe storage system.

### Safety Cans

One technique to reduce the hazards associated with flammables is the use of safety cans. OSHA defines a safety can as "an approved container, of not more than 5 gallons capacity, having a spring-closing lid and spout cover and so designed that it will safely relieve internal pressure when subjected to fire exposure" (29 CFR 1910.106(a)(29)).

The standard limits the amount of liquid in a single safety can and other portable containers.

Container type	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
Glass or approved plastic	1 pint	1 quart	1 gallon	1 gallon
Metal (other than DOT drums)	1 gallon	5 gallon	5 gallon	5 gallon
Safety cans	2 gallon	5 gallon	5 gallon	5 gallon
Metal drum (DOT spec.)	60 gallon	60 gallon	60 gallon	60 gallon
Approved portable tanks	660 gallon	660 gallon	660 gallon	660 gallon



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*In Loving  
Memory of Jessica Lehrke*

**SCI Healthy Quote: The way you think, the way you behave, the way you eat, can influence your life by 30 to 50 years.**

~Deepak Chopra~

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