



Worker Safety

Hearing Protection: Why It's Time for Fit Testing

Brought To You by 3M Personal Safety Division | May 05, 2025

Why it's time for fit testing.

Evidence suggests that hearing protection fit testing can improve the outcomes of hearing conservation programs. Since 2008, the US OSHA/NIOSH/NHCA Alliance has recognized fit testing as a best practice. Now, the first ever fit-test standard sets the bar for fit-test systems. 3M's award-winning E-A-Rfit™ Dual Ear Validation system complies with this standard. With EARfit, you can fit test with confidence.



Over
22 million
US workers
are exposed to
hazardous noise
exceeding 85 dBA¹



Over
27 million
Americans
live with
noise-induced
hearing loss¹



Fit testing contributed
to a **decline** in
hearing shift rates from
5.5% to 1.3%
in one Australian
aluminum
industry study²



Fit testing can show
improvement
in personal
attenuation
ratings (PAR),
now and over time³

What ANSI/ASA S12.71-2018 means for you.

The new ANSI/ASA S12.71-2018 standard provides performance criteria for fit-test systems. It specifies key information that manufacturers must tell customers, making it easier to compare systems.

**Fit testing
hearing
protection
can help you:**



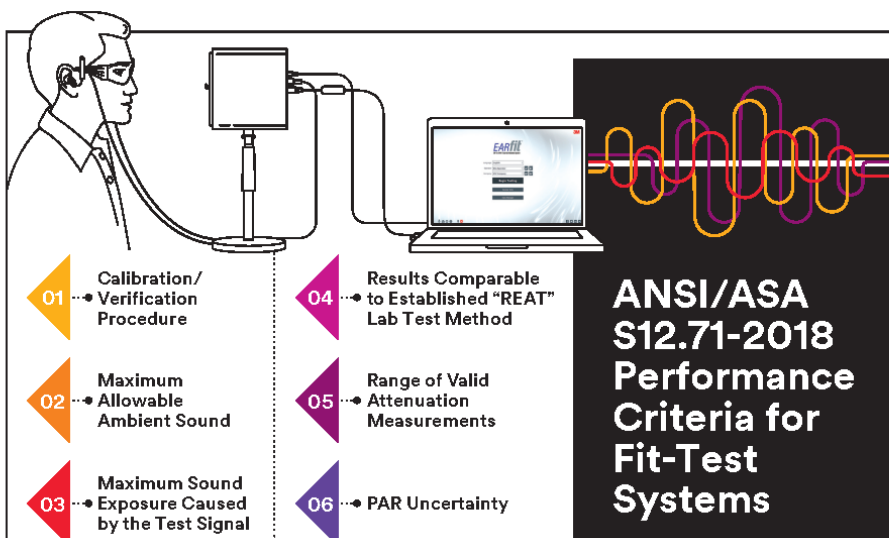
Identify employees
who are unable to
properly fit their
hearing protection



Verify that your
hearing protection
devices yield
adequate protection



Educate employees
about protecting
themselves from noise-
induced hearing loss⁴



Want to Know
10 Questions to Ask
Before You Buy a Fit-Test System?



DOWNLOAD

our Hearing Protection Fit-Testing eBook to find out.

¹ Hearing Protector Attenuation and Noise Exposure Among Metal Manufacturing Workers, Ear and Hearing, May/June 2019 - Volume 40 - Issue 3 - p 680-689.

² A. M. Donoghue, N. Frisch, C. Dixon-Ernst, B. J. Chesson, M. R. Cullen, Hearing conservation in the primary aluminum industry, Occupational Medicine, Volume 66, Issue 3, April 2016, Pages 203-214, <https://doi.org/10.1093/occmed/kqr159>.

³ Wei Gong, Xin Liu, Yuhui Li & Ling Li (2016) Evaluating the effect of training along with fit testing on foam earplug users in four factories in China, International Journal of Audiology, 55:5, 269-277, DOI: 10.1080/14992027.2016.1163307.

⁴ Murphy, W.J. Comparing personal attenuation ratings for hearing protector fit-test systems. CAOHC Update, 2015;25(3):6-8.

Over 22 million US workers are exposed to hazardous noise exceeding 85 dBA. The ANSI/ASA S12.71-2018 standard provides performance criteria for fit-test systems and 3M's award-winning E-A-Rfit™ Dual Ear Validation system complies with this standard. Learn more about it in the infographic above.

Previously Featured on 3M's site.

Browse hearing protection from 3M Personal Safety Division on MSCDirect.com.

www.mscdirect.com/betterMRO

Copyright ©2025 MSC Industrial Supply Co.