§ 211.210 Requirements.

§ 211.210–1 General requirements.

(a) Every hearing protector manufactured for distribution in commerce in the United States, and which is subject to this regulation:

(1) Must be labeled at the point of ultimate purchase or distribution to the prospective user according to the requirements of § 211.204 of this subpart; and

(2) Must meet or exceed the mean attenuation values determined by the procedure in § 211.206 and explained in § 211.211(b).

(b) Manufacturers who distribute protectors in commerce to another manufacturer for packaging for ultimate purchase or use must provide to that manufacturer the mean attenuation values and standard deviations at each of the one-third octave band center frequencies as determined by the test procedure in § 211.206. He must also provide the Noise Reduction Rating calculated according to § 211.207.

(Sec. 13, Pub. L. 92–574, 86 Stat. 1244 (42 U.S.C. 4912))

[44 FR 56139, Sept. 28, 1979, as amended at 45 FR 8275, Feb. 6, 1980; 47 FR 57716, Dec. 28, 1982]

§ 211.210–2 Labeling requirements.

(a)(1) A manufacturer responsible for labeling must satisfy the requirements of this subpart for a category of hearing protectors before distributing that category of hearing protectors in commerce.

(2) A manufacturer may apply to the Administrator for an extension of time to comply with the labeling requirements for a category of protectors before he distributes any protectors in commerce. The Administrator may grant the manufacturer an extension of up to 20 days from the date of distribution. The manufacturer must provide reasonable assurance that the protectors equal or exceed their mean attenuation values, and that labeling requirements will be satisfied before the extension expires. Requests for extension should go to the Administrator, U.S. Environment Protection Agency, Washington, DC 20460. The Administrator must respond to a request within 2 business days. Responses may be either written or oral.

(3) A manufacturer, receiving hearing protectors through the chain of distribution that were labeled by a previous manufacturer, may use that previous manufacturer's data when labeling the protectors for ultimate sale or use, but is responsible for the accuracy of the information on the label. The manufacturer may elect to retest the protectors.

(b) Labeling requirements regarding each hearing protector category in a manufacturer's product line consist of:

(1) Testing hearing protectors according to § 211.206 and the hearing protectors must have been assembled by the manufacturer's normal production process; and it must have been intended for distribution in commerce.

(c) Each category of hearing protectors is determined by the combination of at least the following parameters. Manufacturers may use additional parameters as needed to create and identify additional categories of protectors.

(1) *Ear muffs.* (i) Head band tension (spring constant);

(ii) Ear cup volume or shape;

(iii) Mounting of ear cup on head band;

(iv) Ear cushion;

(v) Material composition.

(2) *Ear inserts.* (i) Shape;

(ii) Material composition.

(3) *Ear caps.* (i) Head band tension (spring constant);

(ii) Mounting of plug on head band;

(iii) Shape of plug;

(iv) Material composition.

If an ear insert or ear cap is manufactured in more than one size (small, medium, large, etc.) each size does not constitute a separate category and is not required to be separately label verified. However, each size must be used when conducting the required test to determine the labeled values for the specified category.

[44 FR 56139, Sept. 28, 1979, as amended at 47 FR 57717, Dec. 28, 1982]

§ 211.211 Compliance with labeling requirement.

(a) All hearing protective devices manufactured after the effective date of this regulation, and meeting the applicability requirements of § 211.201,

must be labeled according to this subpart, and must comply with the Labeled Values of mean attenuation.

(b) A manufacturer must take into account both product variability and test-to-test variability when labeling his devices in order to meet the requirements of paragraph (a) of this section. A specific category is considered when the attenuation value at the tested one-third octave band is equal to or greater than the Labeled Value, or mean attenuation value, stated in the supporting information required by § 211.204–4, for that tested frequency. The attenuation value must be determined according to the test procedures of § 211.206. The Noise Reduction Rating for the label must be calculated using the Labeled Values of mean attenuation that will be included in the supporting information required by § 211.204–4.

[47 FR 57717, Dec. 28, 1982]

§ 211.212 Compliance audit testing.

§ 211.212–1 Test request.

(a) The Administrator will request all testing under this section by means of a test request addressed to the manufacturer.

(b) The test request will be signed by the Assistant Administrator for Enforcement or his designee. The test request will be delivered by an EPA Enforcement Officer or sent by certified mail to the plant manager or other responsible official as designated by the manufacturer.

(c) In the test request, the Administrator must specify the following:

(1) The hearing protector category selected for testing;

(2) The manufacturer's plant or storage facility from which the protectors must be selected;

(3) The selection procedure the manufacturer will use to select test protectors;

(4) The test facility where the manufacturer is required to have the protectors tested;

(5) The number of protectors to be forwarded to the designated test facility and the number of those protectors which must be tested by the facility.

(6) The time period allowed for the manufacturer to initiate testing; and

(7) Any other information that will be necessary to conduct testing under this section.

(d) The test request may provide for situations in which the selected category is unavailable for testing. It may include an alternative category to be selected for testing in the event that protectors of the first specified category are not available because the protectors are not being manufactured at the specified plant, at the specified time, and are not being stored at the specified plant or storage facility.

(e)(1) Any testing conducted by the manufacturer under a test request must commence within the period specified within the test request. The Administrator may extend the time period on request by the manufacturer, if a test facility is not available to conduct the testing.

(2) The manufacturer must complete the required testing within one week following commencement of the testing.

(3) The manufacturer will be allowed 1 calendar week to send test hearing protectors from the assembly plant to the testing facility. The Administrator may approve more time based upon a request by the manufacturer. The request must be accompanied by a satisfactory justification.

(f) Failure to comply with any of the requirements of this section will not be considered a violation of these regulations if conditions and circumstances outside the control of the manufacturer render it impossible for him to comply. These conditions and circumstances include, but are not limited to, the temporary unavailability of equipment and personnel needed to conduct the required tests. The manufacturer bears the burden of establishing the presence of the conditions and circumstances.

(Sec. 13. Pub. L. 92–574, 86 Stat. 1244 (42 U.S.C. 4912))

[44 FR 56139, Sept. 28, 1979, as amended at 45 FR 8275, Feb. 6, 1980; 47 FR 57717, Dec. 28, 1982]

§ 211.212–2 Test hearing protector selection.

(a) The test request will specify the number of test protectors which will be selected for testing from the number of