FACT SHEET

SCHOOL SOUND INSULATION PROGRAM AT O'HARE INTERATIONAL AIRPORT

Background

Since 1982, the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) has administered the School Sound Insulation Program (SSIP) in communities surrounding O'Hare International Airport. As the largest and one of the oldest programs in the world, it has provided over $158 million in federal funds and $193 million in airport funds to sound-insulate 123 completed schools with an additional 1 school in process. In 1996, the O'Hare Noise Compatibility Commission (ONCC) was formed to provide input and oversight to the implementation of all noise programs, including the SSIP.

Purpose

The goal of the O'Hare SSIP is to reduce aircraft noise levels in schools and create a quieter learning environment for students in the O'Hare area.

Eligibility

A school must meet the following criteria in order to seek sound insulation funding:

1. School is recognized by the Illinois Board of Education providing K-12 education and has submitted a letter requesting to participate in the SSIP.
2. School's annual day/night average sound level is equal to or greater than 60 decibels (60 DNL) within the latest Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approved noise contour.
3. School's measured, A-weighted, windows-open interior sound level is equal to or greater than 45 decibels (45 Leq) resulting from aircraft operations.

Funding

If a school meets all criteria and grant funding becomes available, the school would then need to apply to the FAA for sound insulation funding. A school must then obtain an executed grant agreement with the FAA in order to receive reimbursement. The FAA reimburses 80% of the cost using Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funds, while the City of Chicago reimburses the remaining 20% using approved airport revenue sources.

Types of Insulation

Once a school is selected to receive sound insulation funding, there are several measures that can be done to the school in order to reduce aircraft noise impacts. Typical sound insulation measures could include:

- Window modifications;
- Addition of acoustical insulation batts to ceiling assemblies;
- Weather-stripping windows and doors;
- Installation of new air conditioning and ventilation systems; and
- Addition of vestibules at exterior doors.