

FACT SHEET

Noise Pollution



Noise Pollution

Excessive or continuous noise can come from many sources, including air conditioning units, amplified devices, building and construction, machinery and power tools, boats, pumps, and refrigeration equipment. Sometimes this noise can disturb neighbours, disrupt their sleep, and interfere with daily activities. If loud and frequent enough, it can also impact on people's health or work environment.

HOW TO REDUCE NOISE EMISSIONS

If an excessive or continuous noise complaint is made against you, it is important that you take any necessary steps to reduce noise to acceptable levels. If you fail to do so, financial penalties may apply.

The handy tips below are relevant for most equipment or activities that can cause excessive or continuous noise. For more specific tips, see the applicable heading below.

- If you are going to be doing an activity that may result in prolonged noise, speak to your neighbours, and let them know in advance.
- Find out when your neighbours are most disturbed by noise and limit operation during these times if possible.
- Where possible equipment and activities should not be run near neighbouring bedroom windows or offices.
- Regular maintenance of equipment can decrease noise levels and improve effectiveness.
- Install a solid fence or barrier (no gaps) between you and your neighbour to reduce the noise level.
- Consider enclosing the equipment in a ventilated wood box with an absorbent lining, if applicable. Contact the equipment manufacturer or installer for advice.
- Modification of some equipment may reduce noise. Contact the manufacturer or installer for advice.

Air conditioning unit

- Replace the air conditioner with a quieter model

Amplified devices

- Alternatives may be available that are quieter or do not disturb neighbours. For example, telephone repeater bells can be replaced with visual alarms to alert the receiver of a call.

Building and Construction

- When buying equipment, consider a quieter option. Manufacturers often label equipment with the noise level or can provide this information. Alternatives such as electrical equipment may be quieter than petrol models.

Machinery and Power Tools

- When buying equipment, consider if a quieter option is available. Manufacturers often label equipment with the noise level or can provide this information. Alternatives such as electrical equipment may be quieter than petrol models.

Operating power boat engine at a premises

- An enclosed garage or shed may be a more suitable alternative than outside, depending on its location.
- If extensive running of a motor is required, consider an alternative location.

Pumps

- If it's a swimming pool pump, know how long the pool filter needs to run for and set a timer to run at times that don't disturb your neighbour. Talk to your local pool shop or pool pump manufacturer for information on the optimal running of the pump.
- Older pumps can be noisy, and an undersized pump may need to run longer to maintain water quality. Replacing the pump with a quieter or appropriately sized model may reduce noise levels.

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Refrigeration Equipment

- The noise level of refrigeration equipment can vary significantly depending on the type and size of the unit. Units operating on electricity or with an electric option are quieter than engine driven units.
- For truck mounted units, consider parking at a depot or away from residential areas.

COMPLAINTS

If you are affected by noise, talk to the person responsible and try to achieve a solution. Give them time to do something about it.

If you can't reach a solution, you can lodge a complaint with Council. Alternatively, you can contact the Dispute Resolution Centre.

How to lodge a complaint with Council

To lodge a complaint with Council, you will need to provide:

- signed copy of Environmental Nuisance Complaint Form
- details of the emissions (Nuisance Diary)
 - source address
 - date and time it starts
 - the duration each time it happens.

To help you keep track of the details of the noise, it is a good idea to fill out a daily log that you can submit with your complaint.

How Council handles complaints

Council will assess the nature of the complaint to decide the course of action.

When a complaint is received, Council may contact both parties to inform them of the relevant provisions of the legislation and provide information on the relevant nuisance to resolve the issue. The complainant's identity will remain confidential in any correspondence from Council.

If the nuisance persists, it is expected that you both take some steps to resolve the issue before involving Council again. Talking with your neighbours about your concerns is the best way to resolve any recurring issues.

If further nuisance complaints are received, Council may undertake an investigation. The investigation includes consideration of the time of nuisance, how long the nuisance lasts, the environmental values of the area, the impact on the environment and the views of the complainants, the respondents, and neighbours.

The responsible person can dispute the complaint, as they have the right to have the matter heard before the Court. If this occurs, the complainant will be required to supply evidence in person.

A more detailed statement or affidavit may be requested, as Council must be satisfied that evidence is available to support any legal action commenced.

So, talk it out with your neighbour and try to resolve the issue amicably, if you are having a problem with a noise nuisance.

Complaints not investigated by Council

Council shares responsibility for odour complaints with other authorities. Council does **not** investigate the following.

- Noise from house alarms are regulated by Queensland Police Service.
- Noise from loud music and parties are regulated by Queensland Police Service.
- Noise from licensed premises such as hotels and nightclubs is regulated by the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation .
- Noise from vehicles and trail bikes are regulated by Queensland Police Service.
- Noise created by the State Government or Council are administered by the Department of Environment and Science .
- Noise from non-devolved ERA's is administered by the Department of Environment and Science.

This fact sheet created by the Department of Environment and Science has been developed to provide information on the regulation of noise under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 (EP Act).

USEFUL WEBSITES


- Dispute Resolution Centre
<https://www.qld.gov.au/law/legal-mediation-and-justice-of-the-peace/setting-disputes-out-of-court/dispute-resolution-centres/>
- Department of Environment and Science
<https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/>
- Queensland Police
<https://www.police.qld.gov.au/>
- Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation
<https://www.justice.qld.gov.au/about-us/services/liquor-gaming>
- Department of Transport and Main Roads
<https://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/>

How can you contact us?

 online, visit www.banana.qld.gov.au
click on 'Contact us'

 email enquiries@banana.qld.gov.au

 telephone (07) 4992 9500

 mail, post to Banana Shire Council
PO Box 412, Biloela Qld 4715