

Noise - Information Sheet

When is Noise Unreasonable

The *Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997* (the Regulations) sets permitted noise levels depending on time of day and exemptions for certain activities if completed under set conditions. Noise which is more than the permitted level or not in accordance with an exemption is called unreasonable. As a guide, noise which is clearly heard at a residential boundary may be unreasonable.

Party Noise

Music noise from a party will generally exceed noise levels. To help neighbour relations it is a good idea to advise in advance:

- The date of the party
- The time the music will be switched off or turned down
- A phone number of party organiser to ring if the situation becomes unbearable

To limit unreasonable party noise:

- Minimise use of outdoor speakers
- Face speakers away from neighbouring houses
- Lower the bass volume of the music
- Move the party indoors with windows and doors closed as it gets late

People Noise

Noise from people yelling or screaming is described as antisocial behavior and best handled by the Police. Similarly, issues of an abusive, threatening or intimidating nature are a Police matter. Please contact the Police directly.

Noisy Equipment on Residential Properties

Equipment is anything that requires the presence of an operator when in use e.g. lawn mower and power tools.

To limit unreasonable equipment noise:

- Equipment use should be no more than 2 hours per day in total
- Musical instruments should not be used for more than 1 hour per day in total
- Equipment to be used between 7am to 7pm Monday to Saturday and 9am to 7pm Sunday or Public Holidays
- Equipment must be used in a reasonable manner e.g. for the purpose and as intended by the manufacturer
- Equipment is for residential purposes, commercial operation is unreasonable
- Musical instruments should be used inside with the windows and doors closed

Intruder Alarms

Intruder alarms are a useful security device but can create a nuisance if operated incorrectly, continually going off or faulty. Alarms should sound for 5 to 10 minutes before shutting off. If a Police officer is satisfied that the alarm has been causing unreasonable noise for at least 30 minutes, they may take reasonable steps to stop the alarm. Police may call out an alarm technician to disconnect the alarm at the owner's expense.

The City is not authorised to disconnect an alarm.

Barking Dogs

If barking dogs are causing a problem please contact the City's Ranger Services on 9781 0444. This matter is covered under the *Dog Act 1976* and not the noise regulations

Noisy Vehicles

- Off road vehicles for farming purposes are exempt from noise levels if:
 - Used between sunrise to sunset
 - Used in a practicable and reasonable manner
 - The vehicle is in a good working condition
- Off-road vehicles used for recreational purposes are not exempt and must adhere with noise levels
- Noise from a licenced vehicle is generally exempt from the regulations. Noise from burnouts should be reported to the Police under the anti-hoon legislation

Construction Site Noise

Work that creates noise on a construction site is permitted between 7am to 7pm Monday to Saturday. Work at other times is only permitted under an approved noise management plan. Work that does not create noise is allowed outside these times.

Tips when undertaking construction work

- Use tools out of direct sight to neighbours windows and doors
- Avoid using tools early in the morning and late in the evening
- Maintain tools and use most suited to the task
- Plan to use equipment in block periods. e.g. if using a saw to cut timber, measure several pieces of timber to be cut at the same time
- Inform neighbours of likely timeframe of construction work

Tips when dealing with noise from construction sites:

- Speak to the builders on the construction site with your concerns
- Contact the building company who is responsible for the construction
- Be patient, construction work is temporary

What to do if you have a Noise Problem

1. Locate the noise source
2. For one off situations particularly afterhours the Police are the best people to call
3. If a neighbour is creating noise try discussing the situation with them
4. If the situation does not change or you feel uncomfortable, lodge a complaint with the City

To lodge a complaint fill out the City's Noise Investigation Request. This record helps to assess the noise and determine further action.

Complaint Investigation

An Environmental Health Officers will make contact with the alleged offender and inform them of the situation and legislation requirements. Usually this resolves most situations as often the offender is not aware they were creating a problem or the legislation. If the problem continues it may be necessary to take sound level measurements. These must be taken from the property experiencing the noise and not the property making the noise.

Further Information

- For more information, including complaint forms and information sheets please visit these websites: City of Busselton – www.busselton.wa.gov.au
- Department of Environment Regulation – www.der.wa.gov.au
- WA Police – www.police.wa.gov.au
- *Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997* – www.slp.wa.gov.au