

Noise pollution



Noise from powered equipment or devices and various building work can disturb neighbours, disrupt sleep and disrupt normal daily activities and may negatively affect health.

This factsheet includes information for refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment, regulated devices, building work and pumps.

The law

Queensland's *Environmental Protection Act 1994* includes noise limits for the above listed activities and Council is legally required to enforce these limits. If issues between neighbours can't be resolved (refer to fix it at the fence), Council will investigate. If noise levels are found to exceed the allowable limits, Council may issue a fine to the value of 15 penalty units (individual) or 75 penalty units (corporation). Find out more about penalty units at qld.gov.au/law/fines-and-penalties.

Allowable noise limits

Regulated devices	Building work	Refrigeration	Air conditioning	Pumps
<p>Noise not allowed during the following hours:</p> <p>7 pm – 7 am on a business day or Saturday</p> <p>7 pm – 8 am on any other day</p>	<p>Noise from building work not allowed during the following hours:</p> <p>6.30 pm – 6.30 am on a business day or Saturday</p> <p>At any time on any other day</p>	<p>Noise must not exceed the following levels when measured at a neighbour's premises:</p> <p>7 am – 10 pm where the noise is more than 5 dB above the background noise level*</p> <p>10 pm – 7 am where the noise is more than 3 dB above the background noise level*</p>	<p>Noise must not exceed the following levels:</p> <p>7 am – 10 pm where the noise is more than 5 dB above the background noise level*</p> <p>10 pm – 7 am where the noise is more than 3 dB above the background noise level*</p>	<p>Noise must not exceed the following levels:</p> <p>7 am – 7 pm where the noise is more than 5 dB above the background noise level*</p> <p>7 – 10 pm where the noise is more than 3 dB above the background noise level*</p> <p>10 pm – 7 am where the noise is audible</p>

*The background noise is that measured in absence of the problem noise. This can vary throughout the day and night.

Please note: devices used at indoor venues and entertainment events have different noise requirements.

Ways to reduce noise

	Regulated devices	Building work	Refrigeration	Air conditioning	Pumps
Select equipment carefully	X				
Consider the location	X	X	X	X	X
Maintain equipment	X	X	X	X	X
Use acoustic enclosures	X	X	X	X	X
Use modifications	X	X	X	X	X
Install a fence or barrier	X	X	X	X	X
Limit hours of use	X	X			X

Select equipment carefully

Consider the noise level or use alternatives:

- Sweep instead of using a leaf blower
- Compost instead of mulching
- Use electric powered devices instead of petrol engines
- Use visual alarms (flashing lights) or personal pager instead of telephone repeater bells

Consider the location

Consider the following options:

- Complete work indoors or in a work shed if possible
- Close windows and doors to reduce noise levels
- Incorporate noise reduction measures into your workshop
- Work off-site at less sensitive locations where practical
- Place noisy units and devices away from neighbouring windows, offices, multiple walls and corners

Maintain equipment

Regular maintenance will decrease noise and improve the effectiveness of equipment. Contact the manufacturer for advice.

Use acoustic enclosures

Some fixed equipment can be enclosed in a wooden box with an absorbent lining and adequate ventilation to reduce noise. Contact the manufacturer or installer for advice.

Use modifications

Modifications may reduce noise. Contact the manufacturer or installer for advice.

Install a fence or barrier

A solid fence with no gaps can help reduce noise levels.

Limit hours of use

Talk to neighbours and other building occupants to find out if there are times when the noise disturbs them. People are often concerned about operation at night or early morning.

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Fix it at the fence

We're encouraging neighbours to fix it at the fence before referring disputes to Council.

Get tips on **how to resolve neighbourhood issues** here



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