

Simple tips for effective dog diaries

- Have two or more neighbours keep a dog diary.
- When logging an instance of barking over a long period of time be sure to include whether the noise is constant or intermittent.
- Avoid comments on the dog diary that identify who the complainants are.
- Clearly show when the nuisance barking is at its worst.

The dog owner is given three opportunities to abate the nuisance. Each time complainants must complete a 14-day diary, the same as a seven-day diary.

After the second opportunity the City will serve an order against the owner of the dog. If the noise has not been abated and the barking continues the City may issue an infringement in accordance with the Dog Act 1976.

Following the infringement, if the nuisance barking is still happening, the City can take court action against the dog owner.

The completion of the diaries is necessary to provide sufficient evidence for the City to act on.



Simple tips for dog owners

When receiving a letter of complaint from the City the dog owner should understand the person who lodged a complaint may not have spoken to you personally for several reasons. To rectify the problem at the first level of complaint the dog owner can:

- Check with nearby neighbours to establish when and how often the barking may occur.
- At the times the nuisance barking is alleged to be occurring, try leaving home and returning, without the dog noticing. It is recommended this practice be repeated a number of times to confirm or refute the claim, or to establish a pattern to the barking.
- Have an independent neighbour keep a diary of your dog's barking, asking them to observe and report if there is a trigger. These observations and recordings may help to establish the duration, time and nature of the barking or confirm there is indeed a problem that needs to be addressed.
- Determine if other factors (neighbours, children, local youth) are causing the barking to occur.

If you discover your dog is barking:

- Try covering gaps or cracks in fencing to prevent the dog from seeing a distraction or use other means such as shade cloth to block the dogs view.
- Regular exercise and socialisation with other dogs can help keep a dog calm and reduce barking.
- Place a radio between the distraction and the dog, soft music or a radio playing can help block noises that can irritate a dog.
- Seek help from an animal behaviourist for more information.

BARKING DOGS

INFORMATION FOR DOG OWNERS



23 Dundobar Road, Wanneroo, WA 6065

Locked Bag 1, Wanneroo, WA 6946

T : (08) 9405 5000 F : (08) 9405 5499

After Hours : 1300 13 83 93

E : enquiries@wanneroo.wa.gov.au

wanneroo.wa.gov.au  



Introduction

Dogs can be a wonderful addition to any household. Unfortunately some of the most common complaints from the suburbs arise from barking dogs.

Barking, whimpering, howling, whining, yelping and moaning are sounds made by dogs for communication. However, excessive noise can be a real nuisance, especially for neighbours.

Do I live next to a nuisance dog?

Under the Western Australian Dog Act 1976 a dog is considered a nuisance if:

- The Dog makes a noise by barking or otherwise that persistently occurs or continues to such a degree or extent that it unreasonably interferes with the peace, comfort or convenience of any person in any place.

Generally speaking, examples of possible nuisance noise or barking can include:

- Barking at passing traffic, people or other dogs that continues for some time after the distraction has passed.
- Barking regularly during the hours of darkness.
- Barking, whining and/or howling for regular periods in excess of 15min when the owners are absent or are inside the house and the dog is outside.
- Barking associated with other behavioural problems.



What can I do?

Dogs bark for many reasons including excitement when being exercised or when owners return home or on a longer term basis from boredom or in protection of their territory.

It can be very difficult to collect evidence of the frequency and loudness of a dog's barking.

Often dog owners are not aware if their dog is a nuisance to neighbours because they are not at home when the dog barks, and/or the dog is not barking when they arrive home.

The City recommends neighbours speak with dog owners as soon as the dog becomes a nuisance.

IN 60 PER CENT OF CASES, DOG NUISANCE COMPLAINTS ARE SOLVED WHEN THE NEIGHBOUR SPEAKS DIRECTLY TO THE DOG OWNER BEFORE INTERVENTION FROM THE CITY OF WANNEROO.

Dog owners should be informed as to when the dog is barking and how it affects their neighbours.

The complainant should be courteous, informative and supportive of any suggestions to rectify the problem.

However, if the dog owner fails to accept there is a problem, then a complaint should be lodged with the City.

Dog diaries

Following a complaint of nuisance barking the City will send the effected neighbour(s) a copy of the Barking Dog Procedure and a seven day diary.

To better assess a case of nuisance barking the City suggests that two or more neighbours take part in the diary recordings.

The complainant(s) are given 28 days to complete and return the diary to the City at -

Locked Bag 1, Wanneroo, WA 6946
or drop it to the front counter of the Civic Centre
23 Dundobar Road, Wanneroo, WA 6065.

WITHOUT SUFFICIENT EVIDENCE THE CITY CANNOT PROGRESS DOG BARKING COMPLAINTS.

If the diary is not completed or does not support the requirements that constitute nuisance barking the City will be unable to take any further part in the complaint.

If the diary supports the complaint of nuisance barking the City will contact the dog owner to arrange a visit to discuss the complaint.

A letter will also be provided to the dog owner detailing the times the nuisance barking is allegedly occurring. This will be the first opportunity for the dog owner to abate the nuisance.

The main objective of the City's Dog Diary procedure is to satisfactorily resolve dog barking complaints as early as possible.

The successful resolution of a barking dog complaint relies on the full and timely participation of the complainants and of the dog owner.

For more information on the City's procedure or to get a dog barking diary please call Community Safety and Emergency Management on **9405 5000.**