

## Noise

One of the many services provided by the City's Health Services is provision of advice and guidance on issues of noise matters in the community. The City's Health Services does so in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* and *Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997*.

Stereo noise, air conditioners and noisy parties are examples of noises that can sometimes become annoying in residential areas. Some general information and hints to remember when considering these types of noise include:

1. Talk to your neighbour that is creating the noise. They may be unaware that it is causing a nuisance to others. Approach them and ask if they can reduce the noise.
2. Allowable noise levels are set by the Regulations for different times of the day and week. The loudest allowable noise levels are during the daytime between 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday for residential areas. From 7pm to 10pm the levels reduce, and then from 10pm to 7am they are at the lowest.
3. If you can hear the noise from your property boundary it's probably too loud and does not comply with the Regulations.
4. If you plan on having a party, let your neighbours know in advance and switch the music down at 10pm and off at 12pm.

Outlined below is some general information regarding the various types of noise that may cause a nuisance.

### Music

Music must comply with the assigned noise levels stated in the *Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997*. Loud music accounts for up to 40% of all noise enquiries received. As a guide music that is clearly audible at the boundary of a property may cause a disturbance and exceed allowable noise levels. Music with a dominant bass component can be disturbing even when it doesn't appear to be loud. The bass component should therefore be kept to a minimum.

### Specified Equipment and Musical Instruments

Specified equipment is any equipment that requires the constant presence of an operator for normal use. This includes many common household items such as lawnmowers, electric drills, basketballs, dirt bikes and musical instruments. The use of power tools is inherently noisy but is allowed provided the equipment is in good working order and compatible with the work being undertaken. If using a static unit such as a brick saw or compressor it is advisable to position it away from your neighbours' living and sleeping areas. Specified equipment may be used provided:

- 1) The equipment is used –
  - between 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday; or**
  - between 9am and 7pm on a Sunday or Public Holidays.**

Noise emitted from specified equipment outside of these hours must meet the assigned levels. To judge whether a noise emission exceeds the assigned levels, as a general rule, if you can hear the noise past your property boundary, it exceeds the assigned levels.

2) The equipment must **not** be used for more than –

- ❑ **two hours per day; or**
- ❑ **one hour per day if it is a musical instrument**

3) The equipment must be used in a reasonable manner and the noise emitted must not unreasonably interfere with the health, welfare, convenience, comfort or amenity of an occupier of premises receiving the noise. Whether or not the noise emission unreasonably interferes is up to the discretion of the Environmental Health Officer.

## Party Noise

During the warmer months many of us enjoy entertaining outside and it is advisable that you try these recommendations to avoid a strained relationship with your neighbours and to comply with the regulations.

- ❑ Start your party earlier so it can finish earlier.
- ❑ Avoid using speakers outside the house.
- ❑ Let your neighbours know about the party and the time you expect to finish.
- ❑ Adjust the music volume (especially the bass) to ensure it does not cause a nuisance to your neighbours.
- ❑ Move your guests inside, should the party finish late, and close all windows and doors.

Note if a party is occurring late at night and it is causing a disturbance with loud music and or offensive language it is best to notify the police.

## Construction Noise

Work that creates noise on a construction site may be carried out between **7am and 7pm on Monday to Saturday (excluding Sundays and public holidays)** provided:

- ❑ The equipment is the quietest available, and
- ❑ Work is undertaken in accordance with noise practices set out in Australian Standard AS 2436- 1981.

Builders carrying out work on a Sunday or public holiday will need to have an approved noise management plan.

## Intruder Alarms

As the local community has become increasingly concerned with security, there has been a rapid rise in the number of intruder alarms installed. Each year numerous complaints about audible alarms are received with majority of cases been falsely activated alarms because they are an inferior model, incorrectly installed or mistakenly triggered.

These alarms cause significant annoyance to the neighbouring community due to the high noise levels emitted. To reduce the disturbance to the neighbourhood from you security system you can:

- ❑ Ensure you are familiar with your alarm system and can operate it correctly.
- ❑ Keep your alarm system in good working order, serviced yearly.
- ❑ Choose a silent or monitored alarm instead of an audible system.
- ❑ Minimise the risk of alarm being triggered from external factors by:
  - Closing windows and doors.
  - Keeping pets outside.
  - Removing trees and shrubs away from windows/doors.
  - Eliminate vermin and insects.
- ❑ Ensure a licensed security agent installs your intruder alarm. It should:

- Have power backup.
- Be located to minimise damage or interference.
- Limit duration of the siren to 5–10 minutes.
- Limit sound level of external siren to 90 dB (A), 3 metres from perimeter of building.
- Program to lock out any of the sensors that have triggered so they don't re-trigger.

The Environmental Protection Act 1986 gives police the power to silence audible alarms by taking whatever steps necessary, if the alarm has been sounding for 30 minutes or more. In these situations, an alarm technician is called out to disconnect the alarm. The Department of Environment and Conservation may then recover these costs. If the alarm continues to sound regularly for short periods of time, the City can be contacted to follow the issue with the owner and ensure the problem is rectified.

### **Lodging a Complaint**

If you would like to lodge a noise complaint due to noise causing a disturbance you will need to fill out a noise complaint form and noise log sheet. The complaint form must outline the nature of the complaint, the complainant's details and the alleged offenders' address. The noise log sheet should be filled out for a 2 – 3 week period. This provides the City with evidence of the times the noise is causing a disturbance and allows an assessment of the nuisance to be made. The noise log sheet and complaint form is to be returned to:

Health Services  
City of Wanneroo  
Locked Bag 1  
Wanneroo WA 6946

OR

[enquiries@wanneroo.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@wanneroo.wa.gov.au)

Your district Environmental Health Officer will then liaise with you and the neighbour, informing both parties of the requirements of the Regulations. If you require any further questions or information please contact the City's Health Services on 9405 5000.