

Light Nuisance

Environmental Protection Act 1994

Artificial light can come from a range of sources including security lights, spotlights and flood lights. If not positioned appropriately, lights can cause a nuisance to neighbours by interfering with normal daily activities and sleep. If severe enough, this can also impact on their health.

If your neighbours are unhappy with the lighting on your property, find out what concerns they have and seek suggestions to resolve problems. Solutions can often be found that satisfy everyone

Consequences of Causing a Nuisance

It is an offence under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* to cause a light nuisance. Council is responsible for enforcing nuisance laws arising from residential and commercial properties. If issues between neighbours cannot be resolved, Council can investigate to determine if the light source is lawful or unlawful.

If the light is found to be causing an unlawful nuisance, Council may issue an Environmental Enforcement Order with timeframes to rectify the problem. Fines for individuals or corporations can be issued for non-compliance with a direction notice.

Investigation Criteria

When investigating a light nuisance complaint Council will consider:

- the amount of light being emitted
- the duration and rate of emissions
- the characteristics and qualities of the light
- the sensitivity of the environment
- the impact that the light has had or may have
- the impact on any other neighbours or complainants

Ways to Reduce Light Emissions

- Turn off lights when not in use or required for security purposes. Consider sensor switches.
- Locate lights as far as possible from neighbours and away from sensitive areas, such as bedroom windows.
- Avoid placing the light near a reflective surface and use existing features to hide the light source from view.
- Wherever possible, direct light downwards, to illuminate the target area. If there is no alternative, try shades, shields or baffles to help keep spill light to a minimum.
- Some equipment can minimise light spread near, or above, the horizontal.
- Don’t over light. It can cause light pollution and waste energy.
- Keep glare to a minimum. Ensure the main light beam is kept below 70 degrees from horizontal.
- Where appropriate, use lower wattage light globeEnforcement of noise regulation is generally based upon complaints from members of the public.

More Information

For more information visit Council’s website **townsville.qld.gov.au**, or call Council’s Customer Service Centre on **13 48 10**.