

MINIMISING AIR CONDITIONER NOISE

Environmental Protection Act 1994

Noise from air conditioners may disturb neighbours, disrupt sleep and interfere with normal daily activities. If loud enough, they can also affect people's health.

RESTRICTIONS ON AIR CONDITIONER NOISE

The *Environmental Protection Act 1994* places restrictions on the noise level of air conditioners. Council's Environmental Health Officers are authorised to enforce these restrictions.

An occupier must not use air conditioning equipment:

- » before 7am or after 10pm if it makes noise of more than 3 decibels above background levels
- » from 7am to 10pm if it makes a noise of more than 5 decibels above background levels.

RESULTS OF CAUSING A NUISANCE

If Council receives a complaint about air conditioning noise, the complainant will be sent a noise diary. Once the completed diary is returned, Council can investigate the complaint. If the air conditioner noise is deemed to be above the specified noise levels, then appropriate enforcement action can be taken.

BUYING AN AIR CONDITIONER

Always check the noise level description on the air conditioner you intend to buy. The lower the decibel (dB) rating, the quieter your air conditioner. Generally, split system air conditioners are quieter than wall/window (box) air conditioners.

A box air conditioner's mounting in the wall or window may also increase the amount of noise that your neighbour is subjected to.

INSTALLATION POSITION

Finding the right position for your air conditioner is one of the most important decisions. If you place the unit close to your neighbour's house, especially near a bedroom, it is likely to create more of a nuisance.

For example, when houses are built close together the noise is trapped between the walls and eaves and can become louder. Try placing the air conditioner on the rear wall facing the backyard, or on a wall that faces the street.

If the air conditioner must be situated near a neighbour's house then consider constructing some kind of barrier. A solid fence may create a suitable noise barrier.

Split systems should be mounted on rubber blocks to reduce the vibration component.

MORE INFORMATION

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