Building Noise

Environmental Protection Act 1994

Impacts of the Noise

Noise can negatively affect our health and well-being. As well as more obvious things like hearing loss, excessive or continuous noise may cause anxiety, stress, high blood pressure, sleep deprivation, distraction, lost productivity, and a general reduction in the quality of life.

Noise time restrictions

The *Environmental Protection Act 1994* prohibits building noise (audible noise) within the following times:

- Monday to Saturday from 6:30pm to 6:30am
- Sundays or public holidays.

Audible noise is any noise which may be heard on the property boundary – including tools, trucks, machinery or any other source of noise.

This excludes a person carrying out building work at premises used by the person only for residential purposes, except if under an owner builder permit.

Regulating Environmental Nuisance

Building noise is considered an environmental nuisance when it results in unreasonable interference with an environmental value, i.e. it affects the health, welfare, convenience or comfort of any person on or off the site.

Council determines if noise is causing an environmental nuisance based on:

- the time the noise is made
- how long the noise lasts
- the noise environment of the surrounding area
- the impact of noise on the environment.

Enforcement of noise regulation is generally based upon complaints from members of the public.

Reducing Noise Levels

The following methods can help prevent an environmental nuisance:

- Start building work only after 6:30am Monday to Saturday. Exceptions should be discussed first with neighbours and then with Council's Environmental Health Officers if required.
- Power tools create considerable noise which can be difficult to control. Consider using noisy tools at times and places that will minimise nuisance to neighbours.
- Building site equipment should be well maintained and fitted with good quality mufflers to reduce noise emissions. Place noisy plant equipment like cement mixers at maximum distance from neighbours.
- Take care loading, unloading and moving materials to minimise noise.

Unreasonable Construction Noise

If you are having issues with construction noise, Council encourages you to talk to the builders in the first instance to attempt to find a resolution. Solutions can often be found that satisfy everyone.

Making a Complaint

Council has the power to order building work to cease if necessary.

If Council receives a complaint, a Council Officer will investigate. If a breach of the law is found, they may:

- issue a warning notice with information about the laws and how the builder can comply with them
- issue an on-the-spot fine (usually after a warning notice has been issued).

Council may also prosecute for continuing offences.

More Information

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