

# Odour Nuisance

## *Environmental Protection Act 1994*

Odour can cause a nuisance to neighbours and interfere with their normal daily activities. If severe enough, it can impact on people's health. Odour can come from numerous sources, including compost heaps, rotting vegetation, fertiliser, rubbish bins and chemical odours associated with commercial processes.

If your neighbours have concerns with odour coming from your property, Council encourages you to seek a resolution that satisfies everyone.

## **Results of Causing a Nuisance**

It is an offence under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* to cause an odour nuisance. Council is responsible for investigating and enforcing legislation surrounding odour nuisances arising from residential and commercial properties.

If evidence is obtained proving an odour nuisance exists, Council can issue a notice directing you to resolve the matter within a certain time period. Council may issue fines for failure to comply with a direction notice.

## **Investigation Criteria**

When investigating an odour complaint Council will consider:

- the amount of odour being emitted
- the duration and rate of emission
- the odour's characteristics and qualities
- the sensitivity of the environment into which the odour is being emitted
- the impact it has had or may have
- the impact of the odour on any other neighbours.

## Reducing Odour Emissions

### Observe weather conditions

- Consider weather conditions before starting work that may create an odour.
- When applying fertilisers, try to avoid windy days.

In Townsville, complaints are more frequent in winter when people are outdoors and windows are open.

### Good housekeeping

Accumulated vegetation or rubbish may rot and create an odour.

- Minimise rubbish by composting and mulching organic waste and garden clippings and by recycling plastic, glass, paper and cans.
- Regular turning and aerating of compost may help to reduce odour.
- Clean wheelie bins regularly.
- Ensure wheelie bins are put out for collection on a weekly basis.
- Place meat and seafood scraps in the freezer and wait until the night before bin collection day to put them in the bin.
- Rinse containers before placing them in the bin to get rid of any remaining residues or substances that may smell.
- Be careful when storing and using chemicals, paints and other products, which may cause strong and offensive odours.

### Physical barriers

- Where possible, enclose or cover compost bins or vegetation waste.
- Keep the lid to your wheelie bin closed.

### Water use

- Careful spraying of water onto fertiliser may help increase absorption into the topsoil.
- Keep the topsoil damp and complete spraying before wind increases.

### More Information

For more information visit Council's website [townsville.qld.gov.au](http://townsville.qld.gov.au), or call Council's Customer Service Centre on **13 48 10**.