

Noise Fact Sheet



Noise from domestic disturbances, barking dogs and traffic?

The Shire's Health Services cannot investigate noises associated with antisocial behaviour such as vehicle burn outs, swearing, domestic disturbances, smashing bottles, etc. These noise matters should be referred to the Police.

Dog barking complaints cannot be investigated by Health Services, and should be referred to the Shire Rangers.

Road, rail and air traffic noise is exempt from complying with the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997. For more information on air traffic noise, please contact Air Services Australia on 1800 802 584.

Parties and Stereo Noise

Everyone loves a good party and it is part of our culture to celebrate special occasions with friends and family. If you are planning a party please follow these guidelines to maintain good relations with your neighbours:

Let your neighbours know in advance that you are having a party, provide them with your number and invite them to call if they find the noise too loud.

Turn the music down at 10pm and off at midnight (or down to a level that is not audible at the boundary). Monitor the noise at the boundary during the party and try to locate amplified music indoors rather than having it outside. Ask everyone to move inside the house after midnight to prevent loud voices from disturbing neighbours.

Leave the clean up until the morning so the sound of clanging bottles doesn't disturb neighbours.

Ask your guests to leave quietly and say your goodbyes inside.

For everyday stereo use, the volume must be turned down at 7pm, and either off or to a level that is not audible at the property boundary at 10pm. Keep the bass component of your stereo to a minimum, as this is often the common cause of complaints about stereo usage.

Construction Noise

Construction workers are not permitted to start creating excessive noise on building sites until 7am. Subject to specific conditions, noise from building sites does not have to meet the permitted decibel levels if carried out between the hours of 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday. No works creating excessive noise are permitted at all on Sundays or public holidays. Complaints can often be resolved by contacting the building company, however if the early morning noise continues, a complaint can be lodged with the Shire Health Services at shire@broome.wa.gov.au.

For further information please refer to our construction noise guidelines

Where works are proposed outside the hours of 7am - 7pm Monday to Saturday, or on Sundays or Public Holidays, the Noise Regulations require the builder to demonstrate that the works are reasonably necessary. Out of hours works should not occur without the approval of a Noise Management Plan by the Shire.

Musical Instruments

Practising musical instruments can cause a disturbance to your neighbours if carried out for a long duration, or at inappropriate times. Musical instruments must only be used under the following conditions:

- For no more than 1 hour per day (intended to be in an 1 hour block, rather than short bursts throughout the day totalling 1 hour); and
- Between the hours of 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday, and 9am and 7pm Sundays and public holidays.

Always play the instrument inside, and keep all windows and doors closed. Jamming with several different musical instruments must always be done in a musical studio.

If your neighbour is meeting the above requirements, but the noise is still causing a disturbance, discuss the issue politely and try to agree on a more appropriate time for the instrument to be practised

Residential Equipment Usage

There are many types of equipment commonly used on residential properties for maintenance, gardening and hobbies that can create excessive noise. The noise laws permit the use of specified equipment, any piece of equipment that requires the constant presence of an operator for normal use, under specific conditions. Types of specified equipment include lawnmowers, power tools, blower vacs and hammers. The use of this equipment is allowed under the following conditions:

- For no more than 2 hours per day (intended to be in a 2 hour block, rather than short bursts throughout the day totalling 2 hours); and
- Between the hours of 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday, and 9am and 7pm Sundays and public holidays.

Air Conditioners

The noise emissions from air conditioners must meet set decibel levels at the property boundary to ensure that they do not cause a disturbance to your neighbours. By making an informed decision when purchasing an air conditioner, and discussing its installation with your installer, potential noise impacts on your neighbours can be calculated, and compared with permitted levels, prior to installation.

Your installer is both professionally and legally required to carry out a noise impact assessment prior to the air conditioner installation, using noise output information for that unit as well as the site characteristics for that situation. The government and air conditioning industry provide an [easy-to-use guideline](#) to assist your installer to determine which air conditioner is appropriate for your situation.

To help ensure that the noise from your air conditioner will not affect your neighbours it is necessary to select the appropriate air conditioner for your situation, either an evaporative unit, or a refrigeration unit. Small to medium size refrigeration units will display a label identifying the Sound Power Level for the exterior component of the air conditioning unit. The lower the number, the lower the noise level. Information on the Sound Power Level for an evaporative unit may be obtained from the manufacturer. Comparing the Sound Power Level for different units can help you choose the quietest unit appropriate to your situation. Many air conditioning noise complaints could have been prevented by choosing a quieter unit.

For further information refer to:

- [An Installers Guide to Air Conditioner Noise \(Department of Environment and Protection\)](#)
- [Fairair Online Noise Calculator](#)

Commercial and Industrial Noise

The Shire's authorised noise officers can investigate various noise sources from commercial and industrial areas. In most cases sound level measurements will need to be obtained from your property by setting up monitoring equipment.

Roosters

Roosters are not permitted within residential areas. If you are being woken early by a rooster crowing, please identify the property that the rooster is on before contacting the Shire Health Services.

Community Events

Noise emitted from spectators at a sporting event, procession, church assembly, educational facility, fairs, fetes and agricultural shows are exempt from complying with the noise laws. Exemptions are often granted to permit concerts, live bands and fireworks, where the event would lose its character if the noise was not allowed to exceed permitted decibel levels. In these cases the event is advertised to surrounding residents, and conditions are set to ensure the noise finishes at a reasonable time and does not exceed a maximum level.

Security Alarms

In recent times Western Australians have become increasingly concerned about security around both the home and office. This has led to a rapid rise in the number of intruder alarms installed. Each year the WA Police receive numerous complaints about audible alarms. Unfortunately, in about 95% of cases, the audible alarm was falsely activated.

To prevent your alarm from being accidentally triggered, it is important to ensure:

- You are familiar with your alarm system and can operate it correctly;
- The alarm has been installed by a Licensed Security Agent;
- The alarm has auxiliary power backup;
- The alarm is located so as to minimise the possibility of damage or interference;
- The duration of the siren is limited to between 5 and 10 minutes;
- The sound level of an external siren is limited to 90 dB(A), 3 metres from the perimeter of the building;
- The alarm is kept in good working order and serviced at least once a year;
- Windows/doors are properly closed before activating the alarm;
Pets are outside;
- Vermin and insects are not prevalent; and
- Trees, shrubs and branches are well away from windows/doors.

The Environmental Protection Act 1986 gives WA Police the power to silence audible alarms. If a Police officer is satisfied that the alarm has been causing unreasonable noise for at least 30 minutes, he or she may take whatever reasonable steps are necessary to stop the alarm.