

Noise

Regulated devices



Noise from power tools and other regulated devices can disturb neighbours by disrupting their sleep and interfering with normal daily activities (listening to the TV and talking on the telephone). If loud enough, it can impact on peoples health. This fact sheet includes information that may assist residents to reduce noise emissions and meet legal requirements.

Regulated Devices

Regulated devices include:

- a compressor or generator
- a ducted vacuuming or generator

- a grass-cutter (lawn-mower, edge cutter)
- an impacting tool (hammer, nailgun)
- a leaf-blower or mulcher
- an oxyacetylene burner
- an electrical, mechanical or pneumatic power tool (chainsaw, drill, sander)

Note: These provisions do not apply to a builder, owner builder or building contractor on a building site. For more information on requirements for builders contact Council.

Be a good neighbour

Before starting a project that is likely to create noise, take the time to talk to your neighbour. Find out what concerns they may have and ask them about any suggestions they may have to solve the problem.

Remember that by contacting your neighbour first you may prevent problems arising in the future.

The Law

Noise from regulated devices are regulated by the "Environmental Protection Regulation 1998". The regulation provides restrictions on times noise can be made. Noise caused by a regulated device cannot be heard from a residential premises during the following hours:

- 7.00pm to 7.00am – Monday to Saturday
- 7.00pm to 8.00am – Sunday and public holidays

Ways to reduce noise

A range of measures can be used to reduce the noise impact of regulated devices. These include:

Limit hours of use

Talk to your neighbours to find out if there are particular times when the noise disturbs them. Most people are affected at night or early morning when trying to sleep. Remember that some people may undertake shift work.

Selecting quieter equipment or alternatives

When buying equipment, it is important to consider its noise level. Alternative methods may be effective without producing as much noise (e.g. sweeping leaves instead of leaf blowing, composting green waste instead of mulching, using electric powered equipment instead of petrol engine powered equipment). Often, the available alternatives have other advantages (e.g. no fumes, less expensive, more effective).

Location

Carry out work as far as possible from neighbours, especially sensitive areas (e.g. bedroom windows, lounge rooms and entertainment areas).



Work should be conducted indoors or in a wok shed with doors and windows closed to reduce noise levels. Using existing features to hide activities from view may reduce the noise impact. For people that have hobbies that involve frequent use of regulated devices (e.g. woodworking, restoring cars) consider incorporating noise reduction measures into workshops. Often simple and inexpensive measures will reduce the impact of noise.

Maintenance

A lack of maintenance can cause higher noise levels and reduce the effectiveness of equipment. Faulty mufflers on engine-powered equipment are a common cause of annoyance. Contact the manufacturer for advice.

Acoustic enclosures/barriers

An acoustic barrier, such as a solid fence between properties or a specially designed enclosure for some fixed equipment (e.g. compressors, vacuum equipment) may assist in reducing the amount of noise being emitted from a property. Acoustic enclosures must be designed so as to provide adequate ventilation. Discuss this option with the manufacturer or installer.

Equipment modifications

Sometimes modifications can be made to the unit to reduce noise (e.g. more effective mufflers can be fitted to engine-powered equipment). Discuss this option with the manufacturer or installer.

For details please contact Mackay Regional Council.

Phone 1300 MACKAY (1300 622 529) or visit www.mackay.qld.gov.au