



Light nuisance

Light can cause a nuisance to neighbours and interfere with their normal daily activities. If severe enough, it can affect their health. Light can come from numerous sources including security lights, spot lights and flood lights. This fact sheet may help you to reduce light impacts and meet legal requirements.

Be a good neighbour

Talk to neighbours. Find out what concerns they may have and ask for suggestions about solving any problems. Solutions can often be reached which satisfy everyone.

The law

The *Environmental Protection Act* includes controls for light nuisances. Council of the City of Gold Coast (Council) is legally required to enforce these controls. If issues between neighbours cannot be resolved and further complaints are made, an investigation will be carried out.

If the light is determined to be a nuisance, Council may issue the offender with a Direction Notice. This notice will detail the offence and the time frame to resolve the problem. Non-compliance may result in an on-the-spot fine to the value of 15 penalty units (for an individual) or 75 penalty units (for a corporation). See the City website for information about penalty unit values.

Light issues may also be governed by Council's Planning Scheme or other Government agencies.

The criteria

When investigating a light complaint, Council will consider:

- The amount of light being emitted
- The duration and rate of emission and the light's characteristics and qualities.

- The sensitivity of the environment and the impact that the light has had or may have.
- Views of any other neighbours or complainants
- Other relevant criteria.

Ways to reduce light emissions

- Turn off lights when not in use.
- Consider sensor switches for lights used for security purposes.
- Locate lights as far as possible from neighbours and away from sensitive areas, such as bedroom windows.
- Avoid placing the light near a reflective surface and use existing features to hide the light source from view.
- Wherever possible, direct light downwards, to illuminate the target area. If there is no alternative to up-lighting, try shields and baffles to help keep spill light to a minimum.
- Some equipment can minimise light spread near, or above, the horizontal.
- Don't over light. It can cause light pollution and waste energy.
- Keep glare to a minimum. Ensure the main light beam is kept below 70 degrees from horizontal.

For more information

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