



Air-conditioning equipment

Noise from air-conditioning equipment can cause a nuisance to neighbours and interfere with their normal daily activities. If loud enough, it could also affect their health. This fact sheet can help you reduce noise and meet legal requirements.

Be a good neighbour

Talk to neighbours. Find out what concerns they have and ask for suggestions for solving problems. Solutions can often be found that satisfy everyone.

The law

Queensland's *Environmental Protection Act* includes noise limits for air-conditioning equipment and Council of the City of Gold Coast (Council) is legally required to enforce these limits. If issues between neighbours cannot be resolved and complaints continue, an investigation will be carried out.

If air-conditioning equipment exceeds noise limits, Council may issue 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.

Allowable noise limits

On-the-spot fines may be issued if noise exceeds the following level between:

7am to 10pm – where noise is more than five decibels above the background noise level.

10pm to 7am – where noise is more than three decibels above the background noise level.

Background noise is that measured in the absence of the problem noise. For example, when an air-conditioner is not on.

Ways to reduce noise

Limit hours of operation

Find out what times neighbours are most disturbed by air-conditioner noise.

Select a quiet model

Replacing an air-conditioner with a quieter model may help solve the problem.

Choose location carefully

Units should be placed away from neighbouring bedrooms windows, offices, multiple walls and corners.

Regular maintenance

Regular maintenance can decrease noise levels and improve effectiveness. Contact the manufacturer or installer for advice.

Install fences or barriers

A solid fence, with no gaps can reduce noise levels.

Consider an acoustic enclosure

Consider enclosing the unit in a ventilated wooden box with an absorbent lining. Contact the manufacturer or installer for advice.

Modifications

Modifications may reduce noise. Contact the manufacturer or installer for advice.

For more information

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