

Spray drift

Spray drift from activities like spray painting and chemical spraying can cause a nuisance to neighbouring premises, interfering with normal daily activities. If severe enough, spray drift can also damage property and impact on people's health. This fact sheet includes information that helps to reduce spray drift and meet legal requirements.

Be a good neighbour

In many cases, talking to neighbours and building occupants about any spraying activities planned may help to prevent or solve problems. Explaining to neighbours the type of work planned and the control measures may help prevent complaints.

The law

The *Environmental Protection Act* includes controls for spray drift. 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 spray drift 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.

It is important to note that there may be other government agencies responsible for regulating spray drift emissions.

The criteria

When investigating a spray drift complaint, Council will consider:

- the amount of spray, contaminant or pollutant being emitted
- the duration and rate of emission and the emission's characteristics and qualities
- the sensitivity of the environment into which the drift is being emitted and impact it has had or may have
- views of any other neighbours or complainants
- other relevant criteria.

Ways to reduce spray drift emissions

Work indoors

Try to conduct all spray painting in an enclosed area such as a shed.

Windows and doors should be kept shut.

Observe weather conditions

Consider the weather conditions before starting work.

Try to schedule work when the weather is fine and not in gusty or strong winds.

Spray drift complaints are more frequent in summer, when people are outdoors and houses are left open for ventilation.

Use accurate spraying equipment

Technology is rapidly changing to produce equipment that is more accurate and reduces overspray. When spraying with chemicals or pesticides, only spray the recommended amount and spray it carefully. Always use paints, chemicals and equipment in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines.

If you only require a small area of coverage, it may be more practical, efficient and economical to brush on the product rather than spray. Some weed killing products, for example, recommend applying the product with a brush.

Physical barriers

If spraying must be done outdoors, consider erecting physical barriers such as sheets. It is important to consider the location, height and width of the barrier prior to construction. Most importantly, check the wind direction.

Consider alternative locations

Some spraying cannot be carried out in areas without creating a nuisance to neighbours. Consideration may need to be given to relocating to a commercial location or one that houses a spray booth.

For more information

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