

Noise Pollution

Air-conditioning Equipment

Noise from air-conditioning equipment can cause a nuisance to neighbours by interfering with their normal daily activities and detrimentally affect health.

The law

Council has obligations under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* to investigate complaints of nuisance noise from air conditioning systems.

Depending on the outcome of its investigation (incorporating assessment of the impact of the noise emission and the availability of corroborating evidence), council may commence enforcement action by issuing an infringement notice or a direction notice to remedy the noise nuisance.

Environmental Protection Act offence - unlawfully contravene a noise standard Maximum Penalty (Individuals) – 600 penalty units

**Infringement Notice (Individuals)
– 15 penalty units**

Know your noise limits

Enforcement action may be commenced 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 the ambient noise measured in the absence of the problem noise.

Please note that mobile phone noise measurement apps are not considered suitable for assessment of environmental noise nuisance.

Be a good neighbour

Talk to neighbours. Find out what concerns they may have before installing equipment and seek suggestions about solving any problems. Solutions can often be found that satisfy everyone.

Tips 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 bedroom windows, offices, multiple walls and corners.

Maintenance and modifications

Regular maintenance can decrease noise and improve the effectiveness of equipment. Sometimes modifications can be made to the unit to reduce noise.

Before conducting any maintenance or modifications on the unit, contact the manufacturer for advice.

Install a fence, barrier or install an acoustic enclosure

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

In some situations, the installation of a suitably insulated and ventilated timber enclosure can assist in reducing noise from air conditioners. Contact the manufacturer or installer for advice.



I'm being impacted by noise what action can I take?

It's a good idea to make a note of how often you are being negatively impacted by noise pollution. For example, is this a one-off or is it happening regularly?

If it is a regular occurrence, consider talking with the person who is responsible to find a solution. If you don't feel comfortable talking with the person directly, consider leaving a respectful letter in their mailbox.

If you are unable to find a solution, you can lodge a complaint with council. Council will send you a nuisance pack with a complaint form and diary to complete and formalise the complaint.

Lodging a complaint with council

By phone:

1300 307 800

By email:

council@gympie.qld.gov.au

In person:

at one of council's customer contact points

