



Refrigeration Equipment Noise

Noise Nuisance

The definition of Noise is a sound, especially one that is loud or unpleasant or that causes disturbance. Everyone reacts differently to noise. Noise that occurs early in the morning, late at night, on weekends or public holidays can disturb neighbours, disrupt their sleep and interfere with their normal daily activities. Even general noise, such as listening to the TV, talking on the telephone, if loud enough, can impact on people's health and wellbeing. This fact sheet includes information for owners, occupiers and operators and is intended to help manage noise on premises and meet legal requirements.

Refrigeration Equipment Noise

A person on premises must not use or permit the use of the refrigeration equipment on any day during the following hours:

- Before 7am or after 10pm, if it makes a noise of more than 3dB(A) above the background level; or
- From 7am to 10pm, if it makes a noise of more than 5dB(A) above the background level;

Refrigeration equipment means a refrigerator plant, including a refrigeration plant on a vehicle or trailer.

What if there's a noise nuisance in my neighbourhood?

In most cases, the best way to resolve a noise issue is through polite and productive communication between yourself and the resident. If you haven't already spoken with the resident about the noise, we strongly recommend you try this approach first.

Another option is to print out the Noise Nuisance Neighbourhood Handout available at www.gladstone.qld.gov.au, fill in your details (this is optional) and place it in the resident's letterbox.

If you have concerns about approaching or entering communication with the resident, or these measures have proven ineffective, you can report the problem to Council with the address or the location of the property by phoning (07) 4977 6821 and we will begin our investigation.

How Council deals with Noise Nuisance

The Environmental Protection Act 1994, introduced by the State Government, includes guidelines for noise nuisances. Council is legally required to enforce these limits when the noise is emitted from residential premises. There are factors which will be considered when determining whether a noise nuisance is being caused which include:

- The time at which the noise is occurring;
- The amount of noise being emitted;
- The duration and rate of emission and the noise characteristics, and qualities;
- The sensitivity of the environment into which the noise is being emitted and the impact that it has or may have; and
- Views of any other neighbours or complainants.

Council will investigate a Noise Nuisance issue upon receiving a customer request. If the noise is found to be a nuisance, Council may issue the person or business causing the noise with a 'direction notice' or an on the spot fine. A direction notice details what offence has taken place, and the time frame that the offender has to rectify the problem. If a direction notice is not complied with, Council may then issue an on-the-spot fine.

It is important to note that achieving compliance under this process sometimes takes in excess of six weeks.

Ways You Can Reduce Noise

1. **Selecting Quieter Refrigeration Equipment:** The noise level of refrigeration equipment can vary significantly depending on the type and size of the unit. Units operating on electricity or with an electric option are quieter than engine-driven units and older refrigeration equipment can be particularly noisy. Replacing the refrigeration unit with a quieter model may help solve the problem.
2. **Location:** Locate the equipment as far away as possible from neighbours and away from sensitive areas (e.g. bedroom windows). Avoid placing refrigeration equipment near a noise-reflective surface (e.g. alcoves, walls). For truck-mounted units, consider parking the truck at a depot or location away from residential areas.
3. **Maintenance:** Old equipment and lack of maintenance can cause higher noise levels and reduce the effectiveness of refrigeration equipment. Contact the manufacturer or installer for advice.
4. **Fences or barriers:** A solid fence can reduce noise levels. If the fence has any gaps, this method won't be as effective.
5. **Enclosures:** Enclosing the activity or equipment (e.g. in a wooden structure with absorbent lining) can be very effective and relatively inexpensive, although it is important that adequate ventilation is provided. Ask advice from the manufacturer or installer.
6. **Modifications:** Sometimes modifications can be made to the unit to reduce noise (e.g. a noise-absorbent sock can be fitted to some compressors). Discuss this option with the manufacturer or installer.

Please contact Gladstone Regional Council's Environmental Health Unit on (07) 4977 6821, if you require further information on this topic.

How can you contact us?



(07) 4970 0700

STD CALLS: 1300 733 343

For those residents who currently incur STD call rates when contacting their local customer service centre



(07) 4975 8500



info@gladstonerc.qld.gov.au



www.gladstone.qld.gov.au

