

Fact Sheet

Air Conditioning Equipment

Noise from air-conditioning equipment can disturb neighbours, disrupt sleep, interfere with normal daily activities and can cause negative health effects. This fact sheet can help you reduce noise and meet legal requirements.

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.

The law

Queensland's *Environmental Protection Act 1994* includes noise limits for air-conditioning equipment and Council is legally required to enforce these limits. If issues between neighbours cannot be resolved and complaints continue, Council will investigate. If air-conditioning equipment exceeds noise limits, Council may issue a fine.

Noise limits

If noise from air-conditioning equipment exceeds the following limits when measured at a neighbouring premises, the owner may be liable to enforcement action:

- 7am to 10pm – where noise is more than five (5) decibels above the background noise level
- 10pm to 7am – where noise is more than three (3) decibels above the background noise level

The background noise level is the ambient noise measurement obtained in the absence of the source noise being investigated.

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.