

Fact Sheet

Building Work

Building works early in the morning, on weekends or public holidays can disturb neighbours, disrupt their sleep and interfere with their normal daily activities. If loud enough, it can affect their health. This fact sheet contains information for builders and owner-builders (that have an owner builder permit), but does not apply to home renovators. It is intended to help residents and builders manage noise and meet legal requirements.

Be a good neighbour

Talk to your neighbours about what work is planned and how long it will take can prevent or solve problems. Work such as jack hammering, concrete cutting and pouring, should be discussed with neighbours beforehand. A sign on the site or distribution of leaflets detailing work hours may help prevent complaints.

The law

Queensland's *Environmental Protection Act 1994* includes noise limits for building work and Council is legally required to enforce these limits. If issues between neighbours cannot be resolved, Council will investigate.

If building work exceeds noise limits, Council may issue a fine.

Allowable noise limits

Building work must not be audible at a resident's premises: *(includes levelling a residential block in preparation for construction using bobcats etc.)*

- before 6.30am or after 6.30pm – Monday to Saturday
- at any time on Sundays and Public Holidays.

Ways you can reduce noise

A range of measures can be used to reduce noise. These include:

1. Limiting work hours

Talk to neighbours to find out if there are particular times when noise disturbs them. Most people are concerned about noise at night or early morning.

2. Select quieter equipment or use alternatives

When buying equipment, consider the quietest option. Manufacturers often label equipment with the noise level or can provide this information. Alternatives such as electrical equipment, can be quieter, cheaper, more efficient and kinder to the environment than petrol powered models.

3. Select location carefully

Where practical, work as far away as possible from neighbours, bedroom windows and offices. Close windows and doors to reduce noise levels and consider completing some work, such as framing, off-site at less sensitive locations.

4. Regular maintenance

Regular maintenance reduces noise and increases effectiveness of equipment, such as mufflers. Contact the manufacturer for advice.

5. Install fences or barriers

A solid fence without gaps can help reduce noise levels. Consider completing fencing prior to other building work.

6. Consider an acoustic enclosure

Some fixed equipment, such as compressors and vacuum equipment, can be effectively enclosed in a wooden box with an absorbent lining and adequate ventilation. Seek advice from the manufacturer/installer.

7. Equipment modifications

Sometimes modifications can be made to the unit to reduce noise. For example, a more effective muffler can be fitted to engine-powered equipment. Discuss this option with the manufacturer/installer.