

Fact Sheet

Odour

Odour can cause a nuisance to neighbours and interfere with their normal daily activities. If severe enough, it can impact on people's health. Odour can come from numerous sources, including compost heaps, rotting vegetation, fertilisers, rubbish and chemical odours associated with commercial processes. This fact sheet can help you to reduce odours and meet legal requirements.

Be a good neighbour

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

The law

Queensland's *Environmental Protection Act 1994* includes controls for odour. Council is legally required to enforce these controls. If issues between neighbours cannot be resolved and further complaints are made, Council will investigate.

If the odour is found to be causing a nuisance, Council may issue an Environmental Enforcement Order, detailing the offence and giving a time-frame for problems to be rectified.

Non-compliance with an Environmental Enforcement Order may result in a fine.

For some odour emissions, government agencies other than Council may also be responsible for enforcement.

The criteria

When investigating an odour complaint, Council will consider:

- The amount of odour being emitted
- The duration and rate of emission and the odour's characteristics and qualities
- The sensitivity of the environment into which the odour is being emitted and the impact it has had or may have
- Views of any other neighbours
- Any other relevant criteria

Ways to reduce odour emissions

Good housekeeping

Accumulated vegetation or rubbish will rot and create an odour. Minimise rubbish by composting and mulching organic waste and garden clippings and by recycling plastic, glass, paper and cans. Be careful when storing and using chemicals, paints and other products, which may cause strong and offensive odours.

Observe weather conditions

Consider weather conditions before starting work that will create odour. When applying fertilisers, try to avoid windy days. Also avoid wet days as run-off to stormwater drains is harmful to our creeks and rivers. Complaints are more frequent in summer when people are outdoors and windows are open.

Physical barriers

Where possible, enclose or cover compost bins or vegetation. Compost also requires regular turning and aerating. This may help to reduce odour.

Water use

Careful spraying of water onto fertiliser may help quicken absorption into the topsoil. Keep the topsoil damp and complete spraying before breezes develop.