

Dealing with Neighbourhood Noise

Neighbourhood noise can be very annoying. You can often stop noise that disturbs you without involving your council, the police or the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA). This factsheet outlines steps you can take to prevent noise being an issue for you.

When Noise Annoys

How we respond to particular noises depends on the type of noise and how we feel about it. What is fine one day can drive us to distraction the next, and noise that is acceptable to one person may be unacceptable to another.

Recognising how our moods can influence our response helps us judge when others are being too noisy.

If a source of noise is a problem for you there are several things you can do.

Talk to people

Try to solve the problem amicably by talking to whoever is causing the noise. Often people do not realise they are being noisy and are happy to work with you to solve the problem as alternatives are often available.

Contact a Community Justice Centre

If the noise continues, you can contact a Community Justice Centre (CJC). These are government-funded but independent centres that specialise in settling differences between neighbours without entering into complicated legal processes. A CJC may suggest a mediation process. This is where you meet with the people who are making the noise, together with a CJC representative to try and solve the problem. This process will not cost you any money, and has a high success rate.

For information on your nearest CJC, visit www.cjc.nt.gov.au or check the CJC contact details at the back of this brochure.

How to prevent neighbourhood noise problems

What is music to your ears may just be noise to your neighbour. Try to make sure that your activities at home do not become a nuisance to others by showing them some consideration. Here are some things you can do to keep the peace in your neighbourhood:

- Restrict noisy activities to:
 - between the hours of 7am and 7pm Monday to Saturday; and
 - between the hours of 9am and 6pm Sunday and Public Holidays
- Restrict noisy musical instruments and electrically amplified sound equipment (e.g. radios, TVs, tape recorders, CD and DVD players and home theatre systems) to:
 - between the hours of 8 am to midnight on Friday, Saturday or any day preceding a public holiday; and
 - between the hours of 8 am to 10 pm on any other day
- Let your neighbours know in advance if you are going to be doing something noisy. Most people appreciate the courtesy and will be less likely to complain. They can also get away from the noise if they really need to.

- Be mindful of your neighbours when playing amplified music or using power tools etc, even within the recommended times.
- Keep the noise in your backyard or on your balcony down so it won't disturb your neighbours, especially during the evening and at night.
- Avoid revving your car's engine repeatedly when you turn on your car's ignition. Also, remember to turn the car stereo down when coming home late at night and try not to slam doors.
- Choose quiet models when buying equipment such as air conditioners, pool pumps or when purchasing or hiring garden equipment such as leaf blowers and lawn mowers
- When installing air conditioners and pool filters think about the impact on your neighbours and place them away from your neighbour's bedroom and living room windows or have the equipment acoustically shielded to ensure neighbours are not affected.
- Use noisy equipment within the recommended times and for short periods, avoid revving it repeatedly.

Common Types of Neighbourhood Noise

Neighbourhood noise may arise from a variety of sources and these sources may be managed by different Northern Territory Government departments, local councils or other agencies. Table 1 provides a summary of common neighbourhood noise sources and who to contact.

Noise Source	Responsible Agency	Contact
Barking dogs	Local council	See website: Agency contact list or your local telephone directory.
Noisy vehicles	Department of Lands, Planning and the Environment <i>Motor Vehicle Registry</i>	1800 652 628
Noisy alarms	Northern Territory Police 131 444	131 444
Noise from pubs and clubs	Northern Territory Licensing Commission	1800 193 111
Construction noise	EPA	See website: Noise guidelines for development sites
Road works	Department of Construction and Infrastructure	(08) 8999 551
Power and Water Infrastructure Works	Power and Water Corporation	1800 245 092
Noisy domestic equipment	EPA	As per this factsheet

For other contacts see the EPA website Contacts page at www.ntepa.nt.gov.au.

Noise Complaints

Those who feel they have cause for lodging noise complaint are advised to determine the appropriate administering agency as listed above and contact them directly. Where a source and agency is not identified your complaint should be addressed to the EPA.

To lodge a complaint with the NT EPA you should read the Factsheet "Lodging a Complaint". The fact sheet provides a stepped process in the resolution of neighbourhood noise complaints beginning with

discussion and mediation. It recommends keeping a log of all events including time and duration of noise and steps taken to resolve the issue.

It is requested that noise complaints are submitted in writing to:

Environmental Operations Unit
Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 3675
DARWIN NT 0801

or emailed to: Environmentops@nt.gov.au

A log of events should be submitted with all complaints.

For more information contact:

Environmental Operations Unit
Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 3675
DARWIN NT 0801

Phone: (08) 8924 4218

Fax: (08) 8924 4053

Email: Environmentops@nt.gov.au

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