

# Construction noise

## Types of construction noise

[The Northern Territory Noise Management Framework Guideline](#)<sup>1</sup> (the guideline) outlines what you can and can't do when it comes to construction noise. It also provides advice on how the community can make a complaint about a particular noise problem.

Section 3.3 of the guideline covers airborne and ground borne noise associated with construction work and includes:

- erection
- installation
- alteration/repair/maintenance
- cleaning
- painting
- removal
- excavation
- roadworks
- dismantling or demolition of any building or structure.

## Noise management plans

A Noise Management Plan (NMP) will normally be required for all construction projects.

A NMP must be submitted to the NT EPA where a person proposes to undertake an activity that will generate noise which has the potential to not comply with the Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998 or the recommended assigned noise levels included in the guideline.

See Guidance Document Number One within the guideline for the information to be included in an NMP.

All NMPs are required to be registered with the NT EPA. Failure to register a NMP after it has been determined that a construction site has contravened the requirements contained in this section will likely result in a regulatory response in accordance with section 2.2.4 of the guideline.

## Recommended standard hours of work

The guideline recommends standard hours for construction work as shown in the below table to protect the amenity of people. Residential construction equipment such as jackhammers and power tools are covered by the [neighbourhood noise section](#) of the guideline.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ntepa.nt.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/566356/noise\\_management\\_framework\\_guideline.pdf](https://ntepa.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/566356/noise_management_framework_guideline.pdf)

Work type	Recommended standard hours of work
Normal construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monday to Saturday 7:00am to 7:00pm</li> <li>Between 9:00am and 6:00pm Sundays or public holidays</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Construction activities occurring before or after the recommended standard hours of work will incur a regulatory response in accordance with section 2.2.4 of the guideline.</p>
Blasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monday to Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm</li> <li>Saturday 9:00am to 1:00pm</li> <li>No blasting on Sundays or public holidays</li> </ul>

Section 3.3.4 of the guideline provides a series of recommended construction noise levels for airborne and ground-borne noise. It covers a series of sensitive noise receptors by using two types of noise assessment methods which are covered in section 3.3.5 of the guideline.

## Construction work outside the recommended standard hours

A number of construction activities related to roads, railways or other public infrastructure, such as repair and maintenance of public power lines, may be undertaken outside of the times specified within this fact sheet, where it is reasonably required.

When it's possible to do so, public authorities or contractors, who are involved in public infrastructure construction, should advise people who may potentially be affected by noise before the activity occurs.

## Concrete pours

Concrete pours, which generate noise with an adverse impact on amenity, are subject to the same restricted hours of operation as other types of construction activities. However, due to the effect of temperature on the structural integrity of concrete, it is acknowledged that on some occasions it may be desirable to start concreting activities outside of the restricted times.

In these instances, builders should:

- submit a NMP to the NT EPA to undertake work outside of the recommended standard hours of work
- take additional steps to inform neighbours of their activities and ensure all reasonable and practicable measures are taken to minimise noise.

## Being responsible

Responsible persons should not undertake any activity with an adverse impact on amenity outside of the recommended standard hours for construction work.

All reasonable and practicable measures must be taken to minimise noise resulting from the activity and to minimise its impact such as:

- radios that can be heard off site should not be used before 7:00am and be no louder than necessary
- starting any particularly noisy part of the activity after 9:00am, such as use of masonry saws or jackhammers
- builders should take care when dropping materials from a height, for example, into or out of a truck, or when loading or unloading scaffolding

- locating noisy equipment (such as cement mixers and masonry saws) so that their impact on neighbouring premises is minimised (whether by maximising the distance to the neighbouring premises, using structures or elevations to create sound barriers)
- shutting or throttling down equipment (such as backhoes, cranes, bobcats, loaders and generators) whenever they are not in actual use
- ensuring that noise reduction devices such as mufflers are fitted and operating effectively
- adopting off site or other alternative processes that eliminate or lessen resulting noise
- ensuring that equipment is not operated if maintenance or repairs would eliminate or significantly reduce noise.

## Do it yourself building projects

Residents considering a building project likely to create noise should talk to their neighbours.

## Vibration and blasting

Section 3.5 of the guideline provides recommended assigned noise levels for the following sources of vibration:

- construction and excavation equipment
- rail and road traffic
- industrial machinery.

It also provides noise and vibration guidance for Environmental Impact Assessment requirements.

## Further information

### Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority

Website: <https://ntepa.nt.gov.au/your-environment/noise>

Email: [pollution@nt.gov.au](mailto:pollution@nt.gov.au)

Pollution hotline: 1800 064 567

General queries: 08 8924 4218 and ask for the noise regulation section.