

Issues of Noise in Residential Strata Schemes

Noise is a concern for many people in Strata Schemes and Community Associations and is one of the most common complaints when people are living in close proximity.

Time restrictions on residential activities are determined by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and they work in partnership with local councils and the NSW Police to enforce noise control regulations. Below is a table of the time restrictions on various noise sources from residential premises.

Noise source - from residential premises	Time restrictions when noise should not be heard in a habitable room in a neighbour's residence	Who to Contact
Power tools and equipment e.g. lawn mowers and leaf blowers, chainsaws, air compressors, swimming pool pumps	Before 8 am and after 8 pm on Sundays and public holidays	Local council or police
Musical instruments and electrically amplified sound equipment e.g. radios, TVs, tape and home theatre systems	Before 8 am and after midnight on any Friday, Saturday or the day immediately before a public holiday Before 8 am and after 10 pm on any other day	Local council or police
Air conditioners and heat pump water heaters	Before 8 am and after 10 pm on weekends and public holidays Before 7 am and after 10 pm on any other day	Local council or police
Motor vehicles (except when entering or leaving residential premises)	Before 8 am and after 8 pm on weekends and public holidays Before 7 am and after 8 pm on any other day	Local council or police

For full details please visit the [NSW EPA website](#)

What action can I take to prevent noise problems?

Noise issues can have a serious impact on people's lives, aggravate stress levels and even affect their health, particularly when their sleep is impacted. To avoid upsetting your neighbours please consider the following:

- Let your neighbours know in advance if you are going to be doing noisy works or are having a party. Most people appreciate the courtesy and will be less likely to complain. They also have the chance to make arrangements get away from the noise if they really need to.
- 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.
- Keep the noise in your courtyard or balcony down so it won't disturb your neighbours. Remember even low level noise such as talking travels, especially during the still of the evening and early morning.
- Be considerate of your neighbours when playing amplified music or using power tools etc, even within the times permitted by the Noise Regulations. Remember, offensive noise can occur at any time.
- Consider the noise rating and choose quieter models when buying equipment such as air conditioners and consider about the impact on your neighbours when installing this equipment. Place air conditioners away from bedrooms and living room windows. Remember in most schemes installation of an air conditioning system requires approval

What can I do when there is a noise issue?

Talk to people

We always recommend that you start by talking to the person creating the noise and attempt to resolve the issue amicably. Often people are unaware of the level of noise they are creating and that it is impacting others. Once they are advised of this we find most residents will work towards resolving it.

Breach of by-laws

Most, if not all, residential strata schemes in NSW will have a by-law in place that will deal with noise issues. So raise this with your Strata Committee or Strata Manager and see if there is an avenue towards forcing compliance by following the breach of by-law process

For further information you can visit our [By-Law enforcement page](#):

Contact Local Council

Local councils can serve notices on people requiring that they control offensive noise and will advise them what noise levels are acceptable and require the noisy activity be restricted to certain times of the day or specific days. A prevention notice contains conditions on ways of preventing or stopping noise and can be for a wide range of different noises from animal noises to garden equipment and amplified music or instruments.

The notice is issued under section 96 of the [Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997](#) and if not complied with council can issue fines or prosecute.

Contact NSW Police

You can contact your local police station or the police assistance line, particularly when the noise is a one-off problem and you are disturbed by loud music from a party for example

The police can issue a warning or a noise abatement notice directing a person to stop making the noise. A noise abatement notice may be issued at any time of the day or night and can remain in force for up to 28 days.

A person who fails to comply with the notice can be issued with an on-the-spot fine of \$200. Police and authorised officers of councils have powers that allow them to seize equipment used to make noise e.g. a sound system.

Useful Links & contacts:

[NSW Police Station Search](#)

Police Assistance Line, phone: 131 444

Councils Contact details for all NSW councils can be found on the [Office of Local Government Directory](#) page

Community Justice Centres Phone: 1800 990 777

Email: cjc_info@agd.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.cjc.nsw.gov.au

[The EPA Dealing with neighbourhood noise](#)

Environment Protection Authority (EPA) EPA Environment Line: 131 555 or (02) 9995 5000