



RESIDENTIAL NOISE AND HOURS OF USE

Residential Noise

Noise pollution is sound at a level that is annoying, distracting or physically harmful. This can mean different things to different people.

In residential areas, an acceptable level of noise for one person may be unacceptable to another. A person's reaction to noise may also depend on the time of the day and the nature of the noise.

Problems can be caused by the use of power tools, gardening equipment, poorly located air conditioners, music system subwoofers, or people talking loudly outdoors at a late-night party.

The general approach to residential noise management in Tasmania is that a person's use of noise-making equipment, as well as their recreational activities, must not unreasonably interfere with their neighbour's wellbeing. This includes the neighbour's ability to use both indoor and outdoor spaces on their property.

Permissible Hours of Use

To assist in protecting the community from unwanted noise, the [Noise Regulations](#) include the following Permissible Hours of Use.* These have been established for machinery commonly used in garden and home maintenance, on residential construction sites and for recreational activities.

Type	Permissible Hours of Use
Lawnmowers and other power garden maintenance equipment	Monday to Friday: 7 am to 8 pm Saturday: 9 am to 8 pm Sunday and Public Holidays: 10 am to 8 pm
Chainsaws (Note: may be used for domestic garden maintenance on only one day in any 7 consecutive days)	Monday to Friday: 7 am to 6 pm Saturday: 9 am to 6 pm Sunday and Public Holidays: 10 am to 6 pm
Musical instruments and sound-amplifying equipment	Monday to Thursday: 7 am to 10 pm Friday: 7 am to midnight Saturday: 9 am to midnight Sunday and Public Holidays: 10 am to 10 pm
Motor vehicles, motor vessels & outboard motors (unless moving in and out of premises)	Monday to Friday: 7 am to 6 pm Saturday: 9 am to 6 pm Sunday and Public Holidays: 10 am to 6 pm
Portable apparatus (e.g. power and percussion tools, compressors, pumps, generators, and cement mixers)	Monday to Friday 7 am to 6 pm Saturday: 9 am to 6 pm Sunday and Public Holidays: 10 am to 6 pm
Mobile machinery, forklift trucks and industrial motor vehicles (e.g. tractors, graders, rollers & cranes)	Monday to Friday: 7 am to 6 pm Saturday: 8 am to 6 pm Sunday and Public Holidays: 10 am to 6 pm

* refer to regulation 6 for conditions applying to use of machinery outside these hours.

Machinery cannot be used outside the Permissible Hours of Use if it can be heard, or is likely to be heard, within a habitable room in another home (e.g. in a living room or a bedroom).

Any Noise may be Unreasonable

In general, there is a desire to maximize people's opportunities in life, such as to socialize or engage in a hobby, but not at the expense of other people's wellbeing. Essentially, the noise from normal domestic activities carried out at reasonable times is highly likely to be considered as reasonable. This includes routine house maintenance, lawn mowing and other potentially noisy activities.

However, noise occurring at any time, including **within** the Permissible Hours of Use, can still be determined as unreasonable, as can noise from equipment not listed in the Noise Regulations.

Section 53 of the [Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994](#) allows for the following factors to be considered when assessing whether a residential noise is unreasonable:

- Its volume, intensity or duration;
- The time, place and other circumstances in which it is emitted; and
- Whether it is, or is likely to be, audible in a habitable room in any other residential premises.

Respecting your Neighbours

Many noise problems can be avoided by showing respect and consideration for the needs of neighbours and looking at the situation from their point of view. For example, vulnerable people such as the elderly or ill, parents with young children, shift workers or those who work or study at home often need special consideration.

It's not always possible to avoid noise affecting these neighbours, because some noise is normal or may even be unavoidable during the day. However, it is important to be aware of the needs of others. If there is a conflict, both neighbours should agree on what reasonable things can be done to reduce the noise.

Tips to Reduce Noise

- It's good for neighbours to let each other know if they are planning noisy activities such as renovations or a party. People are usually less annoyed if they know in advance when the noise will start and end, and that they can approach someone if it causes a problem.
- For parties, keep night music indoors and move guests inside later at night. Ask guests to be quiet when they leave.
- With music, it's often only the bass noise that bothers neighbours. Turning down bass controls or turning off subwoofers can control the noise, as can using headphones late at night.
- Avoid playing loud music at times when your neighbours are most sensitive, such as early morning or late at night.
- Keep speakers and noisy appliances away from walls or floors shared with neighbours.
- Make sure that any outdoor equipment, such as heat pumps, is located and installed and maintained properly, with appropriate sound control measures. See our [Guidelines for Heat Pumps and Air Conditioners](#) for more information.



Complaints about noise can be directed to your Local Council Environmental Health Officer