

## FIXED EQUIPMENT

Fixed equipment includes domestic heating equipment, systems for the production of hot water, air conditioners, evaporative coolers, pumps, generators or wind turbines. This equipment is permanently installed in the location in which it will operate.

The effects of noise from fixed equipment on owners and neighbours must be considered before it is installed. Noise nuisance problems usually occur when installers choose sites that are too close to boundary fences or neighbouring houses.

The following points should be considered when assessing the suitability of nominated sites:

### 1. Empathy

Consider the likely impact of noise from the equipment from the closest neighbour's perspective.

### 2. Unit selection

Select equipment that suits the needs of the owner as well as that of the surrounding environment.

### 3. Proximity to bedrooms

Equipment should be located as far away from owners' and neighbours' bedrooms as possible. Sleep disturbance from intrusive noise is the most common type of noise complaint.

### 4. Unit orientation

Any fans should preferably be orientated away from neighbours' windows and outdoor entertainment areas. If fans directly face such areas then the potential for noise intrusion increases.

## 5. Unit mounting

It is undesirable to locate equipment on the walls of buildings. An elevated position may provide unimpeded transmission of fan noise to neighbouring buildings. Equipment should be mounted on solid ground level bases and rubber pads can be attached to mountings to minimise noisy vibrations.

## 6. Acoustic barriers

Boundary fences, walls and foliage located between equipment and neighbouring buildings can sometimes assist in reducing noise levels and noise transmission and should be used to advantage when selecting a site. Other options to reduce noise may need to be considered if problems occur.



## ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT & POLLUTION CONTROL

### (NOISE) REGULATIONS 2016

The noise regulations specify the hours of operation and acceptable noise levels (in decibels) from fixed equipment. This means that specific decibel levels must not be exceeded.

- (1) A person must not operate fixed equipment on any premises –
  - (a) from 7.00am until 10.00pm, if the fixed equipment emits a noise that is greater than 45dB(A); or
  - (b) from 10.00pm until 7.00am if the fixed equipment emits a noise that is greater than 40 dB(A)

### Penalty:

Fine not exceeding 50 penalty units and, in the case of a continuing offence, a further fine not exceeding 5 penalty units for each day during which the offence continues. [The value of a penalty unit is set every year under the *Penalty Units and Other Penalties Act 1987*. In November 2016, one penalty unit was \$157].

- (2) A measurement of noise emitted by fixed equipment on any premises, that is to be measured at residential premises –
  - (a) is to be taken one metre from the external wall, of the residential premises, that is closest to the fixed equipment emitting the noise; or
  - (b) if the distance between the external wall of the residential premises closest to the fixed equipment and the property boundary of the residential premises is less than one metre, is to be taken at that property boundary.

## WHAT IF IT DOES CREATE A PROBLEM?

Property owners must not install fixed equipment that unreasonably interferes with neighbours' enjoyment of their environment.

City of Hobart environmental health officers will investigate complaints of noise nuisances from fixed equipment.

**DISCLAIMER:** these guidelines are intended as practical suggestions to help minimise noise nuisances. Adherence to these suggestions should not be interpreted as discharging any party from its responsibilities in relation to the creation of a noise nuisance or as a method by which responsibility can be transferred to the City of Hobart. Adherence to these guidelines will not guarantee compliance with the relevant environmental legislation.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

For more information, contact:

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# Installation of fixed equipment to prevent noise nuisances

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