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Eight ways to be a considerate neighbour:

1. Keep noise levels down at night.
2. Inform neighbours if you are planning a party or invite them.
3. Keep your music equipment inside and close doors and windows where possible.
4. Keep party guests inside. Ask them to keep their noise down when entering and leaving.
5. Tell them of planned work on your section that may be noisy.
6. Ensure burglar alarms cut off after 15 minutes and have to be manually reset.
7. Ensure car alarms are installed correctly and are not oversensitive or faulty.
8. Do not start up noisy equipment such as chainsaws early in the morning or late at night.

For more information:

Phone:

Napier City Council (24 hours 7 days)
(06) 835 7579

Call into:

Napier City Council
231 Hastings Street
Napier 4110

Write to:

Napier City Council
Private Bag 6010
NAPIER 4142


Website:

www.napier.govt.nz
Keyword: noisecontrol



**THAT'S TOO
LOUD!**

Managing Noise in Napier



**Don't let your
good time be at
the expense of
the neighbours.**

When Noise Annoys

Like all cities, Napier can be noisy – it’s a fact of life. You are entitled to make a certain amount of noise as you work and play – but there are limits.

At any time of the day or night you have the right to have excessive noise stopped or reduced.

What Is Excessive Noise?

The Resource Management Act says that excessive noise means any “man-made” noise which unreasonably interferes with the peace, comfort and convenience of any person. Examples of excessive noise may include a loud party, stereo music, band practice, audible alarms or machinery.

Noise from moving vehicles such as cars, aircraft, boats and trains is not under the Council’s control.

A Quiet Word About Noise

Everyone should expect some degree of noise in their neighbourhood from time to time. Noise control is not intended to regulate everyday residential activities such as mowing lawns and vehicles driving on the road.

But if you are concerned about the noise coming from your neighbour’s place, often a friendly word over the fence is all that is required. Talk to the person or company responsible for the noise and point out the problem. You may find they are unaware that they are disturbing you.



Noise Control Procedure

We do not use noise monitoring machines to measure noise from parties, etc.

We do use a matrix system to measure the nuisance level of noise based on these four factors:

1. Volume
2. Time of Day
3. Duration
4. Tone

Each factor is given a points weighting of high (3pts) medium (2pts) or low (1pt) and then added together. If a noise assessment is more than six points we take action against the property owner/occupier. The monitoring matrix ensures that noise levels are not excessive. This does not mean there will be no noise.

How Do I Complain?

When informal action is not possible or fails, you can resolve the problem by taking formal action. Excessive noise complaints are investigated by a Security Company under contract to the Council. Contact us, 24 hours 7 days, by phoning (06) 835 7579.

Phone when the noise is happening so that action can be taken. Your complaint will then be followed up by a Noise Control Officer. Complaints are treated confidentially. Before midnight and during the day you may be asked to call again after 30 minutes to confirm the noise is continuing.

What Can Council Do?

Officers following up on a complaint will assess whether the noise is too loud based on the time of the day or night, the type of noise, location of neighbours, duration of the noise, noise level and the zone (i.e. residential, business, rural or other).

There’s no one set level or decibel reading to measure whether noise is excessive. Deciding whether noise is excessive is up to the judgement of the Noise Control Officer.

If the noise is assessed as reasonable, no further action will be taken. If the noise is judged excessive, an Excessive Noise Direction can be served on the occupants of the property requiring them to immediately reduce or cease the noise. The direction remains in force for 72 hours. If the direction is ignored, equipment can be seized or inactivated and the owner can get an instant fine of \$500.

What Happens If My Equipment Is Seized?

All confiscated equipment comes to Council for safekeeping. The equipment will be returned if the Council is satisfied that it won’t be used to cause noise problems again. To ensure that the equipment is returned to the correct owner you will need to bring proof of identity and the original copy of the seizure notice. You will need to pay an impound fee to cover the cost of seizure and storage. You should contact Council to ascertain the current cost for return of equipment.

If the Council receives further complaints after returning your equipment to you, it is unlikely it will be returned if seized a second time.

What About Alarms?

Alarms must stop sounding after 15 minutes and have to be manually reset. You can complain about alarms that don’t stop after 15 minutes by telephoning (06) 835 7579. An alarm technician, accompanied by Police, will make the alarm inoperable, if possible. The owner of the property will be charged for any costs incurred.



Example of the Monitoring Matrix

Tone	Subjective assessment by Officers depending on characteristics e.g: bass, piercing notes, etc.		
Volume	Low	=	Barely audible
	Med	=	Clearly audible
	High	=	Loud noise
Time of Day	Low	=	7am – 10pm
	Med	=	10pm – 12am
	High	=	12am – 7am
Duration	Low	=	Less than 2 hrs
	Med	=	Less than 4 hrs
	High	=	Over 4 hrs or repeat incidents

Example of the Monitoring Matrix

	Low	Medium	High
Volume	1	2	3
Time of Day	1	2	3
Duration	1	2	3
Tone	1	2	3

Ongoing Problems With Noise

Further action may be required for noise from industrial or commercial sites. A Council Officer can discuss the matter with you.