




Noise Complaints Fact Sheet

Introduction

Noise can be a significant environmental issue. The level and type of sound can affect work, rest and sleep. A number of Tasmanian agencies and authorities regulate noise, depending on what is making the noise and the time of day it occurs. Because of its impact, noise can be considered an “environmental nuisance” under [section 53 of EMPCA](#)¹. The [Noise Regulations](#)² set out noise levels and hours of operation, to protect people from the impact of noise.





Directing Complaints

	Noise Source A-Z	Who to contact
	Agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic bird scarers• Frost fans• Gas guns• Irrigation pumps	Local Council during business hours W: Tasmanian Council Map and Contacts ³
	Drones <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Police involvement is limited to situations where drone use poses an immediate danger• Noise Regulations do not cover short term noise nuisance from drones• The Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) focus on air traffic safety breaches, and do not enforce noise or privacy issues	At the time of printing, no authority manages noise from drones
	Equipment and machinery Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brush cutters• Chainsaws• Lawn mowers	Local Council during business hours W: Tasmanian Council Map and Contacts









¹ <https://www.legislation.tas.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1994-044#GS53@EN>

² <https://epa.tas.gov.au/about-the-epa/policy-legislation-cooperative-arrangements/acts-regulations/empca/noise-regulations>

³ https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/local_government/council_directory

	Noise Source A-Z	Who to contact
	Industrial noise (Small scale or Level 1 Activities) Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bodyworks • Motor garages • Small quarries • Small sawmills 	Local Council during business hours W: Tasmanian Council Map and Contacts
	Industrial noise (Large scale or Level 2 Activities) Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cement works • Construction sites (civil and building) • Blasting for quarries and mines • Fish farm operations • Foundries • Quarries • Rendering plants • Sawmills • Wastewater treatment plants • Wind farms or wind turbines 	Environment Protection Authority Tasmania T: 1800 005 171 E: incidentresponse@epa.tas.gov.au W: For a map of Level 2 activities regulated by the EPA visit: LISTmap ⁴
	Licensed or commercial premises Bands or recorded music at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Festivals • Concerts 	Police for afterhours and weekend complaints about excessive noise T: 131 444 (Non-emergency number) Or if possible, directly contact the event organiser Local Council during business hours for locations regulated by planning scheme W: Tasmanian Council Map and Contacts
	Recreational Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gun clubs • Shooting ranges • Motor racing circuits 	Local Council during business hours for locations regulated by planning scheme W: Tasmanian Council Map and Contacts

⁴ <https://maps.thelist.tas.gov.au/listmap/app/list/map?bookmarkId=327335>

	Noise Source A-Z	Who to contact
 	Recreational Activity cont. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trail bikes and recreational off-road vehicles Vessels including jet skis and motorboats 	Police for mobile activities such as trail bikes and jet skis T: 131 444 (Non-emergency number)
  	Residential Noise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air conditioners Barking dogs Heat pumps Roosters Residential construction Neighbourhood parties with loud music and noisy behaviour 	Local Council during business hours W: Tasmanian Council Map and Contacts Police for afterhours complaints about loud music and noisy behaviour T: 131 444 (Non-emergency number)
  	Transport Noise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aircraft Trains Vehicles 	Aircraft: Contact Air Services Australia T: 1800 802 584 W: Making a complaint ⁵ Trains: Contact TasRail T: 1300 827 724 Vehicles on public roads: Contact Department of State Growth T: 1300 135 513

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I have a noisy neighbour? Or if I'm causing noise?

Often a polite chat with your neighbour can resolve the issue

It is a courtesy to let neighbours know ahead of time that they may expect more noise than usual. For example, if you plan to use a chainsaw or brush cutter near your boundary fence or are hosting a party. Improving a neighbour's understanding and expectations may go a long way to reduce or avoid conflicts over noise.

A polite request to keep the noise down may resolve the issue. People may not know that they are causing irritation or distress until they are told.

⁵ <https://www.airservicesaustralia.com/community/environment/aircraft-noise/about-making-a-complaint/>

The [Noise Regulations](#)⁶ set out noise limits in residential areas (e.g. power tools, musical instruments, chainsaws and sound systems).

If there is ongoing noise, keep a diary of the times and dates so that you have accurate evidence when making a complaint.

If your neighbour speaks to you about noise, try to do what you can to fix the issue to avoid escalation.

What about a noisy heat pump?

Install heat pumps correctly

Property owners, retailers, installers and council officers should be familiar with the noise emission limits in the [Guidelines for heat pumps and air conditioners](#)⁷. Confirm that the outside unit is operating correctly and that it is located sufficiently distant from neighbouring houses to ensure compliance.

How often can gas guns be used?

Gas guns are intended to produce disturbing noise to scare birds away from crops. They should only be used when crops are vulnerable to bird attack. Remember that they don't provide absolute protection.

As a rule of thumb, the greater the separation between the gas gun and the nearest residence, the greater the noise level reduction. Noise levels will reduce noticeably for each doubling of this distance.

As a guide:

- Locate more than 400 m from a residence in a residential, country township, or rural living zone (or similar) and restrict operation to six shots per hour for 10 hours of the day (7:00 am to sunset).

Primary Industry Activity

There is an immunity from prosecution under section 53(5) of EMPCA for 'noise nuisance' emitted from a primary industry activity as defined in the [Primary Industry Activities Protection Act 1995](#).

Consideration should first be given to whether the activity is covered by that Act. If it is, then no noise nuisance offence can be pursued under EMPCA, but other regulatory action can be taken – such as the issue of an Environment Protection Notice under section 44 to limit the nuisance being caused.

Want to know more?

Further information is available on the EPA website:

[Residential Noise and Hours of Use](#)⁸

[Make a Report](#)⁹

[Guidelines for Managing Trail Bike Noise on Private Land](#)¹⁰

[Site Information](#) – accessing information about sites regulated by the EPA¹¹

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Attributions: Chainsaw: icon made by [Freepik](#); jetski: icon made by [Iconixar](#); lawnmower: icon made by [Webalys](#); target shooting: icon made by Vitaly Borachev, all sourced through [flaticon.com](#). Other icons sourced through [uxwing.com](#) and [free-icon-rainbow.com](#)

⁶ <https://epa.tas.gov.au/about-the-epa/policy-legislation-cooperative-arrangements/acts-regulations/empca/noise-regulations>

⁷ <https://epa.tas.gov.au/environment/noise/noise-publications/heat-pumps-and-air-conditioners>

⁸ <https://epa.tas.gov.au/environment/noise/noise-management/residential-noise-and-hours-of-use>

⁹ <https://epa.tas.gov.au/working-together/make-a-report>

¹⁰ <https://epa.tas.gov.au/environment/noise/noise-publications/managing-trail-bike-noise-on-private-land>

¹¹ <https://epa.tas.gov.au/business-industry/site-information>