

NOISE ISSUES

Most noise is due to traffic, equipment, machinery, people, airplanes, music, and animals, amongst other things. The City cannot control all of the noise that happens on a daily basis, however, the City does regulate some types of noise.

For the purpose of regulating noise activities, the City has defined Daytime Hours as 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The following is a description of some of the different types of noise regulated by the City:

Please be aware that this is a summary of the noise standards. Refer to the Sunnyvale Municipal Code Section 19.42.030 for the complete requirements.

Business Deliveries

Delivery/arrival of goods, wares and merchandise by the use of a motorized vehicle, other than an automobile or train are limited to daytime hours for businesses adjacent to a property within a residential zoning district. (Businesses existing prior to 2/1/95 are exempt from this requirement.)

To report deliveries made after 10:00 p.m. and before 7:00 a.m. please contact the Department of Public Safety at (408) 730-7110 for immediate attention. Neighborhood Preservation can also be contacted at (408) 730-7610 and the business owner will be notified of the hours for deliveries.

Powered Equipment

Powered equipment is defined as any motorized device powered by electricity or fuel used for construction, demolition, property or landscape maintenance and repairs. Powered equipment includes but is not limited to lawn mowers, edgers, parking lot sweepers, saws, sanders, motors, pumps, generators, fans, wood chippers, vacuums and nail guns. For the purposes of noise standards, powered equipment does not include leaf blowers.

Powered equipment used on a temporary, occasional or infrequent basis which generates a maximum of 60dBA shall be operated only during daytime hours when adjacent to a residential zoning district.

Powered equipment used on other than a temporary, occasional or infrequent basis shall comply with the operational noise requirements.

To report powered equipment being used between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. please contact Neighborhood Preservation at (408) 730-7610.

Leaf Blowers

A "leaf blower" is a small, combustion engine-powered device used for property or landscape maintenance that can be hand-held or carried on the operator's back and which operates by propelling air under pressure through a cylindrical tube.

It is unlawful to use a leaf blower in any residential area except between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Effective January 1, 2000, all leaf blowers operated in or adjacent to a residential area shall operate at or below a noise level of 65 dBA at a distance of 50 feet, as determined by a test conducted by the American National Standards Institute or an equivalent. The dBA rating shall be prominently displayed on the leaf blower.

Operational Noise

The City defines operational noise as continuous or frequent noise related to the basic use of the property. Operational noise includes, but is not limited to noise produced by: air conditioners, equipment for swimming pools or spas, industrial machinery, air compressors or forklifts. Powered equipment or deliveries shall not be considered operational noise.

Operational noise shall not exceed 75dBA at any point on the property line of the premises upon which noise or sound is generated. The maximum decibel for properties adjacent to residential zoning districts are:

- Daytime – 60dBA
- Nighttime – 50dBA

If noise occurs during nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.), and the Public Safety Officer has determined that the noise involves a steady, audible tone such as a whine, screech, or hum, or is a staccato or intermittent noise (e.g. hammering) or includes music or speech, the allowable noise or sound level shall not exceed 45dBA.

To report this type of noise you can contact Neighborhood Preservation at (408) 730-7610 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Mondays through Fridays. After regular business hours, please contact the Department of Public Safety at (408) 730-7110.

Loud Music/Parties/Animals

Other types of noise that the City regulates are noises which stem from people or animals. Some of these types of noise include:

- Parties which include loud music and people coming and going;
- Dogs which bark all night;
- Loud disputes between people;
- Youth who drive by playing their music on the car stereo

To report these types of disturbances, contact the Public Safety Department at (408) 730-7110 or 911 if it is an emergency.

If you have any questions, please contact the Neighborhood Preservation Division at (408) 730-7610.