



NOISE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Noise in our society is increasing to levels that can be considered pollution. It is a health hazard that people face every day and is often overlooked, perhaps because loud noise is so commonplace in public transport, hang-out spots and even from traffic.

But what really is noise pollution?

Traditionally it may be defined as unwanted or disturbing sounds. Sounds become unwanted and disturbing when they interfere with normal activities such as sleeping, conversation or disrupt or diminish one's quality of life. Persistent and escalating sounds can often be considered annoyance; it is this annoyance that can have major consequences, primarily to one's health.

If you live next door to a noisy neighbor then you may be able to relate, but a person who suffers from lack of sleep soon experiences symptoms of fatigue, elevated stress levels, and in some instances may be very irritable, thus affecting the way they interact with others.



There are various sources of noise pollution

1. **Industrialization:** Big machines used in manufacturing often times produce loud noise, for example, compressors and heavy machinery used in the construction of new buildings.
2. **Domestic Appliances:** Even in our homes, as we move towards modernization we employ the use of time- saving devices such as vacuums and pressure cookers which may not bother us, but may affect a sleeping neighbor or cause dogs to behave erratically due to the persistent noises.
3. **Poor Urban Planning:** The close proximity of factories, night clubs, etc. to residences also plays a contributory role in noise pollution.
4. **Social Events:** Noise is at its height at most social events, whether it is a party, disco, public celebration; people normally flout rules set by the local administration and create noise nuisance when public events are held.

As the body with responsibility for environmental management, the



Environmental Protection Agency makes provisions for noise management and allows persons who must carry on noise-making activities to apply for an Environmental Authorization which if granted will be accompanied by measures to control the noise emitted into the environment.



Key points to remember

- ❖ If you are involved in or plan to be involved in construction you should note that activities are restricted between the hours of 11:00pm and 6:00 am Monday-Saturday and before 6:00 am and after 6:00 pm on Sundays.
- ❖ You are not allowed to operate loud speakers and sound making devices in a park unless in possession of a Noise Permit.
- ❖ Any person wishing to operate a sound-making device between the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. on any day of the week, should make a written application to the EPA ten (10) days before the date they propose to operate the device.
- ❖ Owners of night clubs or pubs are advised to sufficiently soundproof all areas where loud sounds will be emitted to prevent sound or noise from emitting within a distance of fifty feet from the premises causing a noise disturbance to others.

Any person who intends to engage in activities that would result in the emission of noise is required to apply to the EPA for Authorization to do so.

Loud noise commonly is emitted from construction, industry, and transport.

- ❖ Owners of motor vehicles should ensure that the sounds emanating from their vehicles are not plainly audible at a distance of fifty feet away from the motor vehicle emitting the sound.

Don't be part of the problem, become part of the solution!

Share your ideas and questions by sending letters to: "Our Earth, Our Environment", C/o EIT Division, Environmental Protection Agency, Ganges Street, Sophia, Georgetown; or email us at eit.epaguyana@gmail.com.