

Noise Calls FAQ

HAVE YOU TALKED TO YOUR NEIGHBOR?

Does Noise Control have jurisdiction?

The City of Portland's Noise Program has jurisdiction over incidents within the City limits of Portland in which the noise source is amplified, can be tied to a specific property and is not coming from the same property where the complainant lives.

Is the noise coming from within City of Portland boundaries?

If no, refer to relevant government.

Unincorporated Multnomah County and Troutdale –

Multnomah County Sheriff's Enforcement Division – 503-988-5300, Press 0. no online form.

Gresham - Code Enforcement: 503-618-2248 – <https://greshamoregon.gov/services/mygresham/>

East Metro Mediation: 503-618-3247 – free neighborhood mediation service in Gresham.

Beaverton – City Hall: 503-526-2222 - <https://apps.beavertonoregon.gov/secure/reportproblem/>

Beaverton Community dispute Resolution Center: 503-526-2523

Washington County: 503-846-3605, <https://www.co.washington.or.us/hhs/swr/report-a-problem/noise-complaint.cfm>

Clark County: 1-360-397-2408

Is the noise happening after 10pm and before 7am?

If yes, contact Police non-emergency, 503-823-3333, Press 0. Police will only respond to noise issues during these hours. The City Noise Program office hours are 8am-5pm so issues occurring not during noise office or Police response hours need to be reported by leaving a message on the Noise Hotline for call back the next day.

Is the noise coming from a mobile source that CANNOT be tied to a specific property (i.e. street musician or automobile)?

If yes, Noise Control does not have jurisdiction and there is not likely to be a response from the Police for “disturbing the peace”. The only option is to call Non Emergency Dispatch at 503-823-3333, Press 0 to see if they can dispatch and officer to respond.

Is the noise coming from the same property as the complainant (i.e. the same apartment complex)?

If yes, Noise Control does not have jurisdiction. Noise is measured from adjacent property lines so if the noise source is within the same property than the noise code does not have jurisdiction. The individual may need to speak with their property manager/owner and/or the neighbor creating the noise. Neighborhood Mediation may be an option, 503-595-4890. The Community Alliance of Tenants Renter's Rights Hotline: 503-288-0130 is a good resource for tenants to better understand their rights and options when working with a landlord/owner.

Is the noise amplified (i.e. coming from an electronic device like machinery, stereo, or amplifier)?

If no, Noise Control does not have jurisdiction (*except for drums*). The only possible option is law enforcement for a possible “disturbing the peace” violation.

If Noise does not have jurisdiction, what agency should the caller be referred to?

Barking Dogs: Multnomah County Animal Services, 503-988-7387 – phone hours M,T,Th,F 11-7pm, Sa,Sun 9-4:30, closed Wed. Animal Services will not typically get involved in a barking dog or pet nuisance issue until the complainant takes initial steps to attempt to resolve the issue which may include attempting to talk to the owner, sending out a letter to the owner, trying neighborhood mediation and providing documentation of the issue. Refer to online guide for Barking Dogs & Other Noise Nuisances at <https://multcopets.org/services/barking-dogs-other-noise-nuisances>

Rooster noise or other livestock issues:

Bureau of Planning & Sustainability, Specified Animals Program: **503-823-1174 (phone msg only)**

Train noise (also information about Quiet Zones):

US Dept. of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration **Region 8: 1-800-724-5998** (Vancouver WA)

Aircraft noise:

Port of Portland, Noise Management Office, **503-460-4100 or 1-800-938-6647, online complaint form -** <https://www.portofportland.com/NoiseManagement/ComplaintForm>

Watercraft/Motorboats: Multnomah County Sheriff's Office River Patrol: Willamette – 503-243-7952. Columbia – 503-988-6788

Garbage/recycling/compost/yard debris trucks: 503-823-7202 (phone only). Residential service shouldn't begin until 6am, Commercial has no restrictions. Bureau of Planning & Sustainability regulates.

Street Musicians: The Noise Office does not currently enforce noise related to street musicians due to limited resources, however Downtown Portland has a unique partnership that encourages street music while minimizing the impact on businesses and residents. A coalition of musicians, business people, residents and public officials crafted this partnership agreement. No permits are required for street musicians. The agreement states that noise should not be heard beyond a 100 ft radius of the musician and that musicians may play for up to one (1) hour at any corner and play at any corner only twice a day. <http://cleanandsafepdx.com/cleaning-security/street-musician-agreement.html>. There is no enforcement of this partnership agreement. The only enforcement of street musicians would potentially be done by the Police in response to a "disturbance of the peace" or "public nuisance" violation.

Issues with bars or liquor serving establishments: The Noise Office does not regulate unamplified human voice (patrons hanging out on the sidewalk, outdoor patios, etc.) but can deal with music related noise issues from establishments. For human voice issues refer to Non Emergency Police Dispatch, 503-823-3333 Press 0 to request they assist with a "disturbance of the peace" or "public nuisance" issue.

*For other concerns related to liquor serving establishments refer to **State of Oregon Liquor Control Commission, 503-872-5253.***

Noise coming from Parks: The Parks Rangers have jurisdiction over noise issues in Portland parks. Contact them at 503-823-1637. If the noise is related to an event than there may be a noise variance, these variances are done directly through Parks Customer Service, 503-823-2525, so they would be the contact for related issues.

Unknown Noise Source? Generally the Noise Program can only assist if the noise source is known and identified by the complainant. There have been a few exceptional cases where noise inspector has been able to determine noise source through investigation.

Variations

Spectator Facilities (Rose Quarter, Providence Park): Spectator venues such as these typically have a variance that covers noise levels for their events. Occasionally there are separate but associated noise concerns that the Noise Office will be able to reach out to try and remedy and/or send a warning letter regarding.

Summer events in Waterfront Park: (Rose Festival, Cinco de Mayo, Pride, Blues Festival, Big Float, etc): They all have Noise Variations. For calls regarding other events, refer to Noise staff to check on whether events have a variance. Noise concerns related to these events can be taken and will be added to notes for consideration for future noise variations for these events. If variance permit requirements are violated by the event a citation may be issued.

Examples of Concerns where Noise Can Open a Case

Vehicle noise:

A. Vehicle can be tied to a specific address - Complaint about a neighbor driving their car around playing the stereo too loud during the day - If the noise can be tied to a specific address a noise complaint case can be opened. If the concern is a loud engine than the best referral is Police non-emergency as it would take someone on-scene to determine if a complaint is valid and the Noise Program does not currently have those resources. This is case where they should always first attempt to communicate with the neighbor.

B. Vehicle CANNOT be tied to a particular address - law enforcement is the only possibility to respond. Another related example of this would be semi-trucks pumping their "Jake Brakes" through I-5's Terwilliger curves. PBOT Traffic Safety and Neighborhood Livability: 503-823-7233 to request law enforcement traffic enforcement.

A caller may cite the noise code stating that excessive noise from a vehicle is prohibited. That is true, however noise office resources do not currently allow for investigations where we are unable to tie the noise source to a tax lot property where the property owner can be identified and contacted.

Home Stereo/Loud Music/Garage Band/Car Stereo: A Noise Case will be opened when the noise can be heard inside the complainant's home with the doors and windows closed.

Leaf Blowers: Leaf blower issues can be very complicated so refer to Nicholas at 503-823-2091. There is a list of "approved leaf blowers" on the website at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/civic/article/577551> Leaf blower allowed use varies depending on time of year, zoning and blower type.

Construction Noise: Title 18 allows contractors to use construction equipment Mondays through Saturdays from 7am to 6pm, including all equipment above standard decibel limits for the zone. The Noise Program has no jurisdiction over other construction site related noise issues such as human voice, car noises, etc.

Home Power Tools used by Homeowners: Homeowners and renters are allowed to do home improvement construction work on their own homes from 7am to 10pm, 7 days a week as long as standard decibel levels are maintained.

When used inside a dwelling unit, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., the sound levels generated by such equipment shall not exceed 60 dBA, when measured at the lot line.

When used outside a dwelling unit, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m., the sound levels generated by such equipment shall not exceed the following levels, for equipment of the appropriate class, when measured at a distance of 25 feet or at the lot line, whichever is further from the source:

1. 5 HP or less, such as, but not limited to, lawnmowers, riding tractors and small garden tools: 80 dBA;
2. More than 5 HP, such as, but not limited to, powered hand tools and snow removal equipment: 85 dBA.

- BDS Code Enforcement, 503-823-2633, <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bds/complaints> has general jurisdiction over non-noise related construction site issues.

- PBOT deals with work zone issues affecting the use of the public right of way: 503-823-7002 Option 4, pbotworkzone@portlandoregon.gov

Power Washers/Street Sweepers: Concerns about cleaning activity in the Downtown Portland Clean & Safe District should first be referred to Clean & Safe at 503-224-7383 and for Trimet related shelters, etc. to Trimet at 503-962-2444.

Alarms:

1. **Car** – Noise Office is unable to respond to a car alarm because of the urgency involved in having the alarm shut off and the difficulty locating the owner information. Recommend that complainant call Police Non-emergency, 503-823-3333 Press 0
2. **Home / Business** – Noise Office will open a case to send a warning letter to the property owner. This is usually resolved easily and requires very little further action.

Fireworks: Noise Office only regulates the professional shows, which have a Noise Variance Permit. For individuals using fireworks and firecrackers, complainants should call the police non-emergency number, 503-823-3333 Press 0. Complaints regarding large fireworks events can be taken and documented for future consideration of variances.

Filming crews: Usually has a Noise Variance Permit. Noise Office will look into the complaint if caller knows the address where it occurs.

HVAC/Air Conditioning Units/Generators: A case can be opened but resolution is difficult? Realistically the only response will be a warning letter. "Have you talked to your neighbor?" is definitely a good question in this situation.

Animal Noises from Legal Animal Facilities (i.e. Doggy Day Care): While the Noise Program has no jurisdiction over “barking dogs” it has opened cases regarding doggy day care facilities in the past so it is possible.

Parking Garage warning beeps: Required by law for safety reasons, so it falls under the exemptions part of the Noise Code. Noise Program action not likely.

Power station / utility pole: Contact the utility company directly to report the issue. Noise Program action not likely.

When a valid complaint is filed and a Noise Case opened what happens?

Normally a Warning Letter is sent. You may inform the caller of this and that if the situation is not better in 2 weeks they may call back.

When they call back put them in contact with Noise Program staff (503-823-7350 Option 2 or noise@portlandoregon.gov) for follow up information regarding an open case. Normally they will need the complainant to gather additional data in the form of a Noise Log.

If someone calls who is the recipient of a Warning Letter put them in contact with Noise Program staff (503-823-7350 Option 2 or noise@portlandoregon.gov)

Taking a Report

Use online form at

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/civic/index.cfm?&cfid=255505085&c=41440&cftoken=179b7cfd6e131ee%2DEC40E628%2DB2B7%2DB9A3%2DCFF40DB80B8AB0BB>

- Name, address, phone and email of complainant (if they don't have email just put “NA”)
- Do they wish to remain confidential, if they do then they wouldn't be able to testify at a code hearing, which could impede enforcement.
- Do they want to be contacted by Noise Program staff.
- Address/location of violating property
- Pick most relevant category
- Incident/Issue brief description
- Dates and Times – estimates ok.
- Frequency – you can select multiple options by holding down “Ctrl” button on keyboard.

Once a complaint is filed, normally a warning letter is sent by Noise staff to the violator. If issues continue it would be helpful for community member making the complaint to keep a log of ongoing incidents as that will help the Noise staff with subsequent enforcement actions should they become necessary.