
From: Laura Carroll [lcarroll88@msn.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2004 10:38 AM
To: noise@ci.portland.or.us
Subject: Comment regarding Noise Review Board Garbage Subcommittee Recommendations for Nighttime Noise Abatement

Dear Noise Review Board:

I am a resident of the King's Hill neighborhood, and have been following the Subcommittee's efforts on nighttime noise abatement, including attending meetings in which engineering reports were presented and discussed. I have reviewed the Subcommittee Recommendation report, and wish to make a couple of concerns known:

1) Handling some complaints on a "case by case" type basis will overload an already sorely understaffed Noise Control Office, and complaints will not be effectively addressed.

Our neighborhood wishes to pursue a complaint regarding hauler pick up hours. A pocket of this neighborhood is multi-use, and includes residences, businesses (in former historic residences) and large multi unit buildings, and early morning pick up is quite a problem. Large truck collection (including long loud engine idling, compacting noise, container lid slamming and rolling) begins as early as 5am. I have attempted to work with the haulers directly, and have had some success with a small hauler in Gresham. They were picking up at 4am, and after talking with them, they agreed not to do so before 6am. They claim if they pick up in this area any later they will not get their rounds done by the end of the day. Larger haulers come as early as 5:30am and claim the same. We contend that this claim is made more out of their concern for inconvenience than actual business hindrance. We wish to pursue an option that will give haulers the same number of pick up hours, but change them so that they begin no earlier than 7:30 am and extend on the back end to early evening, e.g., 8pm. We are concerned that if a case by case process is approved, this issue will not be of great enough priority, and will take a long time to make it to the top of the Noise Control Office's stack, if it does at all.

2) Will our issue have a way to be addressed if what the Subcommittee is recommending is approved?

It is unclear what the complaint process will be, and if our issue will "qualify" for review and action.

I agree with the Subcommittee that implementing engineering solutions should not be required across the board; it is questionable how well the noise will actually be reduced as perceived by residents, and it is a costly gamble that it will allay noise concerns. Additionally, we believe that franchising should not be ruled out in the future, if it means there will be more negotiating power with haulers. In my experience, trying to deal with them directly is challenging; while Waste Management hears concerns, they do not seem to be willing to actually do anything to come to a solution that all parties can live with. Smaller haulers are under greater pressure for profit margins thus can be unwilling to cooperate at all. After repeated calls, the Gresham business I dealt with, while unprofessional in their customer relations, had to admit that 4am was a bit of an outrageous collection time. We are still not happy with their 6am time, but felt that is as far as we could get with them at this time.

We would like final recommendations to include specific and required intermediary participation on the part of the City on behalf of the residents. We are the paying customers for garbage collection, often