

DENVER NOISE CONTROL ORDINANCE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Did you know that Denver has an ordinance restricting noise levels in the community? The Noise Control Ordinance (Denver Revised Municipal Code, Chapter 36) exists to “protect, preserve and promote the health, safety, welfare, peace and quiet for the citizens of the city through the reduction, control, and prevention of noise.”

WHAT IS NOISE?

Noise is defined as unwanted sound and is assessed using established standards in the code. A sound that is pleasant to one person may be considered noise (unwanted) to another person. Noise is measured in decibels, (dB). Chapter 36 uses the A-scale, dB(A), with a fast response time setting on the sound level meter. This most resembles what the human ear hears.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE DENVER NOISE CONTROL ORDINANCE?

- Types of noise covered: on-going or recurrent noise that crosses from one property to another property. Examples of such noise sources: air conditioners, exhaust vents, early morning trash collection, construction, lawn mowers, leaf blowers, etc.
- Allowable residential noise levels vary, but most fall within the following ranges: 55 dB(A) from 7 a.m. - 10 p.m. and 50 dB(A) from 10 p.m. - 7 a.m.
- Exemptions: There are 17 exemptions for very specific circumstances, including snow removal and emergency sirens.

WHO ENFORCES THE ORDINANCE?

The Denver Department of Public Health and Environment (DDPHE) enforces this ordinance and responds to complaints of excessive community noise. The Denver Police Department (DPD) may also enforce this ordinance.

HOW CAN I GET A COPY OF THE NOISE ORDINANCE?

A copy of Denver’s noise ordinance Chapter 36 - Noise Control can be found in the Denver Revised Municipal Code (D.R.M.C.) - <https://library.municode.com/index.aspx?clientId=10257&stateId=6&stateName=Colorado>.

WHAT CAN I DO TO DEAL WITH A NOISE PROBLEM?

- Be considerate with your own actions. Consider your neighbors when you install a new air conditioner, consider the time when you mow your lawn, or do other noisy activities.
- Talk to your neighbors if they are creating noise that bothers you. Many times, a friendly request will solve the problem.
- Call Denver’s 311 to file a complaint if your efforts are not successful. Some necessary information to file a noise complaint includes:
 - Your name, address and telephone number, so we can contact you for specifics and keep you informed of the status of your complaint. Your information will be kept confidential.
 - Information on the noise source, such as address, noise type, dates and times when the noise occurs, and a contact name and phone number at the source.
 - For trash trucks, construction and deliveries, please refer to our website for further information and instructions. Visit www.denvergov.org/hfhh and click on the Noise Program tab.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I FILE A NOISE COMPLAINT?

- DDPHE will contact you for any additional information they need.
- If possible DDPHE will go out and take a noise measurement to determine if there is a violation.
- If a noise violation is measured, DDPHE will contact the source of the noise to request a compliance plan and schedule.
- If the complaint is not resolved by the given deadline, DDPHE will take enforcement action.

WHAT IF I AM PLANNING A PARTY OR AN EVENT?

The following are some suggestions from our department to help you promote a successful and complaint free event:

- Review the Denver Noise Ordinance.
- Contact the residents that live in the general area in which you will be conducting your event.
 - Provide dates, times, and types of events that will take place.
 - Offer solutions if there are complaints, including a telephone number and contact name of a representative from your event.
 - Adhere to the schedule that you provide the residents.
 - Consider tear down and set up of the event, and include this in your schedule.
 - Consider a neighborhood meeting with residents to address any concerns that they may have regarding your event.
 - Promote communication.

- Plan ahead and consider the following:
 - Noise sources such as bands and D.J.'s should direct speakers away from populated areas of a neighborhood. Speakers should also be directed or angled down towards the listeners, and away from objects that might cause the noise to "bounce."
 - Test all amplification and noise sources before the event takes place, but do not exceed allowable decibel levels while conducting your tests.
 - Have noise meters on hand, you can borrow one from the city with a cash deposit. Contact Public Health Inspections at 720-865-5410.
 - Hire an event representative to be at the event, to take random noise readings to ensure compliance with the regulations.

WHAT ABOUT NOISES THAT ARE NOT COVERED BY THE NOISE CONTROL ORDINANCE?

- Noises that are not covered by the Noise Control Ordinance may be covered under Disturbance of the Peace (Chapter 38-89) or Prohibited Noises (Chapter 38-101). These ordinances are enforced by the Denver Police Department.
- Examples of "other" noises: loud radio or TV, people arguing, etc.
- Noise associated with dogs is covered under Chapter 8. This ordinance is enforced by Denver Animal Control.



The Denver Department of Public Health & Environment (DDPHE), Denver's nationally-accredited public health agency, empowers Denver's communities to live better, longer. The divisions of DDPHE are: Animal Protection, Community Health, Environmental Quality, Office of Sustainability, Office of the Medical Examiner and Public Health Inspections. In partnership with Denver Public Health, DDPHE provides quality public health services to the City and County of Denver. For more information about DDPHE, visit www.denvergov.org/dphe or follow us at @DDPHE.