

## Environmental health section construction site guidelines

These guidelines have been produced to help builders, site managers and site workers operate their sites with consideration to nearby residents. They are not a comprehensive list of legal and technical requirements but guidance notes setting out the Council's position and giving advice.

### Legal controls

The Control of Pollution Act 1974 and Environmental Protection Act 1990 place specific duties on contractors to ensure that noise, smoke and dust is kept to a minimum. The Council actively enforces the requirements of this legislation.

### Noise & vibration – general

The Environmental Health Section imposes certain restrictions and conditions on working hours, methods of work and type of equipment used to ensure noise levels are kept at an acceptable level.

The requirements apply to most types of construction site work (see notes at end) and are imposed by notice service under the Control of Pollution Act.

### Requirements

The permitted hours of work when noise can be audible at a construction site boundary are:

Monday to Friday	8:00am to 6:00pm
Saturday	8:00am to 1:00pm
Sunday and bank holidays	No work allowed

Any noisy operations outside these hours cannot be undertaken without prior approval of the department and permission is only granted in exceptional circumstances e.g. Emergency works.

Noise and vibration must be kept to a minimum by methods of work that conform with the 'Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites' (See BS 5228 Parts 2 and 4: 1997, and EC and UK Noise Legislation, as applicable).

At all times the best practicable means as defined in the act must be employed to reduce noise.

In the Borough of Barnet, the quietest plant or machinery should be used, and all equipment should be maintained in good mechanical order and fitted with appropriate silencers, mufflers or acoustic covers.

Stationary noise sources should be sited as far away as possible from noise sensitive development. Acoustic barriers consisting of site materials such as bricks, earth mounds or proprietary types should be constructed when noise cannot be sufficiently reduced by careful siting of noise sources.

Piling should be carried out by methods causing minimum noise and vibration. All workers on the site including sub-contractors, self employed staff and employees must be made aware of the need to keep noise and disruption to a minimum from building works, equipment, plant and machinery, radios, music, vehicles or any other sources.

The movement of vehicles to and from the site must be controlled to minimise noise and disturbance to nearby residents.

### Note:

The Environmental Health Section generally takes legal action against any person/company contravening the requirements of a notice served upon them.

### Smoke

Before works start precautions should be taken to prevent smoke on site from machinery, vehicles or combustion. Bonfires are not permitted.

Petrol and diesel engines used to power equipment and plant should not emit dark smoke once the running temperature of the engine has been reached, and should be regularly checked and maintained to prevent smoke and fumes.

The Council are empowered, under the Control of Pollution Act and Environmental Protection Act, to impose requirements that will prevent nuisance from smoke and dust. Where necessary, notices will be served to require alternative working methods or preventative measures.

### **Dust**

Prevention measures should be taken to minimise the formation and spread of dust. Dust should be controlled at source by a continuous fine water spray. To ensure that this is done an adequate water supply must be provided, with sufficient hoses to reach all parts of the site and a means of disposal of waste water.

### **General**

In all cases the importance of communication with nearby residents cannot be over-stressed. Pre-warning regarding specific disturbing operations will usually avoid later confrontations and complaints.

It is Council policy to ensure all construction sites are operated in compliance with the legislation to ensure they keep disturbance to nearby residents to a minimum.

It is therefore vital that liaison is established between officers from the Environmental Health Section and the site management at the earliest possible stage of any construction works.

### **Type of work subject to control:**

- a) the erection, construction, alteration, repair or maintenance of buildings, structures or roads.
- b) breaking up, opening or boring under any road or adjacent land in connection with the construction, inspection, maintenance, or removal of works.
- c) demolition or dredging work; and
- d) any work of engineering construction (whether or not comprised in paragraph (a), (b) or (c) above).

You can get further information or advice from Scientific Services

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