



Noise Regulations fact sheet

Audible alarms (security or intruder)

November 2021



Purpose

This fact sheet provides information in relation to unreasonable noise caused by audible (security or intruder) alarms in Western Australia.

Introduction

False alarms and faulty security systems can disturb your neighbours and waste valuable police resources. There are provisions under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (the EP Act) to address false alarms and faulty security systems and ensure they do not cause excessive noise disturbances to the community.

Legislative context

Section 99 of the EP Act gives the police in Western Australia the power to deactivate audible alarms, if the police officer is satisfied that an alarm:

- a) has been sounding in or on any premises or a vehicle for not less than such period as is prescribed
- b) is emitting unreasonable noise.

The prescribed period for audible alarms is 30 minutes. If an alarm has been sounding for at least this duration, the police may contact an alarm technician to deactivate or disconnect the alarm.

The EP Act also enables the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation to recover the full cost of the disconnection from the owner of the premises. In recent years, these costs ranged from \$187 to \$600.

If necessary, the department may take legal action against the owner of the premises to recover cost.

Tips to prevent disturbance

By following these simple steps, you may reduce the chance of your security system disturbing your neighbours:

- Familiarise yourself with your alarm system to ensure correct operation. Most false alarms are caused by operator error.
- Ensure that the intruder alarm is installed by a licensed security agent and that it complies with Australian Standard AS/NZS 2201.1:2007.
- Consider the following points: as a general guide, your alarm system should
 - have auxiliary power backup
 - be located so as to minimise the possibility of damage or interference
 - limit the duration of the siren for not longer than a total of 5 minutes



- limit the sound level of an external siren to 90 dB(A), 1 metre from the perimeter of the building
- be programmed to lock out any of the sensors that have triggered so that they do not re-trigger, unless the system is manually reset onsite; or a subsequent alarm is generated in a different zone of a multi-zone system.
- Minimise the chance of your intruder alarm being accidentally triggered by external factors by ensuring that when the system is active:
 - windows and doors are properly closed
 - pets are outside and vermin and insects are not prevalent
 - trees, shrubs and branches are well away from windows and doors.
- Opt for a silent or monitored alarm instead of only using an audible system.

More information

For further information, please contact the Environmental Noise Branch at the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation via email (info@dwer.wa.gov.au) or phone (08 6364 7000).

Legislation

This document is provided for guidance only. It should not be relied upon to address every aspect of the relevant legislation. Please refer to the Department of Justice, Western Australian Legislation website at www.legislation.wa.gov.au for copies of the relevant legislation.



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