

Dust and dirt from construction

Fact Sheet

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Dust and dirt

Dust from construction work or other activities on residential premises can be a nuisance to neighbours and interfere with normal daily activities. If severe enough, it can also damage property and impact on people's health.

This fact sheet includes information that can help residents to reduce dust emissions and meet legal requirements.

Be a good neighbour

If work such as excavating, building or landscaping is planned, it may be helpful to discuss this with the occupants of nearby premises beforehand. A sign with contact details on site, or distribution of leaflets, may help prevent complaints.

The law

Under Council's *Local Law No. 10 (Public Health) 1999*, the release of dust on residential premises may constitute a nuisance if it causes or is likely to cause harm to human health or safety, personal injury or property damage. If issues between neighbours cannot be resolved and further complaints are made, Council will investigate.

If the dust is determined to be a nuisance, Council may issue the person causing the dust with a compliance notice, which will detail the nuisance and the timeframe the offender has to rectify the problem. Fines for non-compliance may be issued.

The criteria

When investigating a dust complaint, Council will consider:

- the amount of dust being emitted
- the duration and rate of emission and the dust's characteristics and qualities
- the sensitivity of the environment into which the dust is being emitted and the impact that it has or may have
- views of any other neighbours or complainants
- other relevant criteria.

Ways to reduce dust emissions

Retain vegetation - Retain as many plants and as much grass on the site as possible. Strips of grass can act as dust barriers to neighbouring properties. Even low or small amounts of vegetation can significantly lower wind speed and reduce the amount of dust leaving a site.

Plan your work - Plan what work needs to be done. Try to carry out work in stages so some vegetation can be left as barriers as stages are completed.

Use on-site waste as a barrier - Try using any on-site waste as dust barriers. For example, unused sheeting or roofing could be used as temporary dust barriers, or green waste could be mulched and spread on the ground to protect the topsoil layer.

Consider physical barriers - Physical barriers, such as fences, can be very effective when used properly. Material such as shade cloth could be erected as a dust fence around the work area. It is important to consider the location, height and width of fences prior to construction. Most importantly, check the wind direction.

Water - Spraying water onto topsoil can be very effective in reducing dust. It is important that enough water is used to keep the topsoil layer damp and that spraying is completed before strong breezes develop.

Hydromulch products - For larger areas, products such as hydromulch could be useful. Hydromulch consists of recycled, pulped newspaper that has been mixed with water and can be sprayed onto the ground to form a protective layer. The mix can also include grass seeds and fertilisers. This product could be used at the end of a working day and before weekends.

For more information

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Visit www.logan.qld.gov.au

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