

LIGHT POLLUTION

FACTSHEET

Light pollution can be a nuisance to neighbouring residents and may interfere with their normal daily activities. If severe enough it can even affect their health.

The Criteria

Light pollution may be caused by excessive illumination, glare or light spillage. Sources of light pollution include, but are not limited to:

- Security and spotlights
- Advertising devices
- Flood lights
- Entertainment events

Be a Good Neighbour

If you are affected by light pollution, in the first instance it is always best to approach and talk to your neighbour directly and try to find a solution that suits both parties, ensuring you allow reasonable time for them to respond. Council receives and investigates light nuisance complaints generally when neighbours are unable to resolve the issue. Maintaining a nuisance diary and taking photographs of how you are impacted may assist our investigation.

The Law

The *Environmental Protection Act 1994* governs light nuisance investigations. When investigating, Council will consider:

- the intensity and duration of the light emitted;
- the direction, position and other characteristics or qualities of lights;
- the sensitivity of the environment and level of impact on neighbouring properties;
- views of any other neighbours or complainants; and
- other relevant criteria.

Light nuisances may also be regulated by the *Planning Act 2016* and applicable Australian Standards.



Council does not investigate:

- Light pollution from freeways and highways, including on/off ramps. This is the responsibility of the Department of Transport and Main Roads.
- Lighting associated with an environmentally relevant activity regulated by the Department of Environment and Science (e.g. chemical manufacturing).
- Lighting associated with an environmentally relevant activity regulated by Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (e.g. poultry farming).
- Lighting associated with a State or Local Government premises or activity. This is the responsibility of the Department of Environment and Science.

How to reduce light pollution:

- Turn off lights when not in use or needed. Consider time-controlled sensor switches.
- Position light fixtures furthest away from sensitive areas of neighbouring residences such as bedroom windows.
- Avoid positioning lights near reflective surfaces and use existing features to screen the lights from view from neighbouring residences.
- Direct lights downwards to illuminate the target area only. If there is no alternative to up lighting, try shields and baffles to minimise light spillage.
- Restrict the number of light bulbs used within an area. Over-lighting can cause light pollution and waste energy.
- Keep glare to a minimum and ensure the main light beam is kept below 70 degrees from horizontal.

For further information please contact Council's Environmental Health Section on 1300 79 49 29.