



## Audible alarms (security or intruder)

### Purpose

This fact sheet is designed to provide information in relation to unreasonable noise caused by audible alarms (security or intruder) 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 Act) to address and ensure false alarms and faulty security systems do not cause excessive noise disturbances to the community.

### Legislative context

Section 99 of the Act gives WA Police the power to inactivate audible alarms.

- s 99. Police officers may stop audible alarms
- (1) If a 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; and
    - (b) is emitting unreasonable noise,

The prescribed period for audible alarms is set as 30 minutes under regulation 6 of the *Environmental Protection Regulations 1987*.

If a police officer is satisfied that the alarm has been causing unreasonable noise for at least 30 minutes, the officer may take any steps as appear to him/her to be reasonably necessary to stop the alarm.

reg 6. Period prescribed for audible alarms

For the purposes of section 99(1)(a), the prescribed period is 30 minutes.

In these situations, an alarm technician will usually be contacted by the police to inactivate or disconnect the alarm.

The Act also enables the CEO of the Department of Environment Regulation (DER) to recover the full cost of the disconnection from the owner of the premises. In recent years, these costs have ranged from \$187 to \$533.

If necessary, DER may take legal action against the owner of the premises to recover costs.

### Tips to prevent disturbance

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

- Most false alarms are caused by operator error. Familiarise yourself with your alarm system to ensure correct operation.
- Ensure that the intruder alarm is installed by a Licensed Security Agent and that it complies with Australian Standard AS/NZS 2201.1:2007.
- 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 five minutes;

- limit the sound level of an external siren to 90 dB(A), one metre from the perimeter of the building; and
- 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 on-site, or a subsequent alarm is generated in a different zone of a multi-zone system.
- Your intruder alarm can be accidentally triggered by a number of external factors. To minimise risk, ensure that when the system is active:
  - windows and doors are properly closed;
  - pets are outside and vermin and insects are not prevalent; and
  - trees, shrubs and branches are well away from windows and doors.
- Opt for a silent or monitored alarm instead of only an audible system.

### More information

For advice on security or intruder audible alarm, or related matters, please contact DER Noise Regulation on 6467 5000.

This document is available in alternative formats and other languages on request.

### Related documents

Additional publications about noise regulation are available online from [www.der.wa.gov.au/your-environment/noise](http://www.der.wa.gov.au/your-environment/noise), or can be requested by phoning 6467 5000.

### 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 State Law Publisher (SLP) for copies of the relevant legislation, available electronically from the SLP website at [www.slp.wa.gov.au](http://www.slp.wa.gov.au).

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### Legal advice

The information provided to you by DER in relation to this matter does not constitute legal advice. Due to the range of legal issues potentially involved in this matter, DER recommends that you obtain independent legal advice.