

ARTICLE XII. NOISE¹

Sec. 58-441. Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

A-weighted level (dBA) means the total broadband sound level of the noise spectrum as measured using the "A-weighted network" of a sound level meter. The unit of measurement is the dBA. Sound level meter settings shall be for slow response, except for motor vehicle measurements which shall be fast response.

Ambient noise means the all-encompassing noise associated with a given environment, being usually a composite of sound from many sources near and far.

Commercial zone means any geographic area designated for commercial or professional activities by the zoning authority having jurisdiction over such area, and also includes any area that is designated as institutional on the countywide future land use map.

Continuous noise means a noise which remains essentially constant in level during the period of observation.

County means Pinellas County.

Decibel (dB) means a division of a logarithmic scale used to express the ratio of two like quantities proportional to power or energy. The ratio is expressed in decibels by multiplying its common logarithm by ten.

Emergency means a situation wherein immediate work is necessary to restore property to a safe condition following a public calamity or immediate work is required to protect persons or property from an imminent exposure to danger.

Gross combination weight rating (GCWR) means the value specified by the manufacturer as the loaded weight of a combination vehicle.

Gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) means the value specified by the manufacturer as the loaded weight of a single vehicle.

Impulsive noise means a noise which is characterized by brief excursions of sound pressure which significantly exceed the ambient noise level.

Industrial zone means any geographic area designated for industrial or manufacturing activities by the zoning authority having jurisdiction over such area.

Intermittent noise means a noise whose sound pressure level exceeds the ambient noise level at either regular or irregular intervals.

¹Editor's note(s)—Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, adopted Jan. 7, 2003, amended Art. XII, Noise, in its entirety to read as set out in §§ 58-441—58-454. Formerly, such article, §§ 58-441—58-452, pertained to the same subject matter, and was derived from Ord. No. 74-11, adopted Oct. 15, 1974; and Ord. No. 96-51, adopted July 2, 1996.

Cross reference(s)—Offenses and miscellaneous provisions, ch. 86.

State law reference(s)—Motor vehicle noise, F.S. §§ 316.272 et seq., 403.415 et seq.

Motor-driven cycle means every motorcycle and every motor scooter with a motor which produces not to exceed five-brake horsepower, including every bicycle with a motor attached.

Motor vehicle means any vehicle which is self-propelled and every vehicle which is propelled by electric power obtained from overhead trolley wires, but not operated upon rails.

Motorcycle means any motor vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, but excluding a tractor.

Noise means one or a group of loud, harsh, nonharmonious sounds or vibrations that are unpleasant and irritating to the ear.

Noise level means the sound pressure level as measured in dBA unless otherwise specified. A measurement of noise must be at least five dB above the ambient noise level.

Octave band means all of the components in a sound spectrum whose frequencies are between two sine-wave components separated by an octave.

Residential zone means any geographic area designated for single-family or multifamily dwellings by the zoning authority having jurisdiction over such area.

Sound level meter means an instrument to measure the sound pressure level of relatively continuous and broadband noises. The sound level meter used to determine compliance with this article shall meet or exceed the requirements for type 2 sound level meter in accordance with ANSI Standard S1-4.

Sound pressure level means the square ratio, expressed in decibels, of the sound pressure under consideration to the standard reference pressure of 0.0002 dyne/cm². The ratio is squared because pressure squared, and not pressure, is proportional to energy.

Vehicle means any device, in, upon or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a highway, except devices moved by human power or used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Cross reference(s)—Definitions generally, § 1-2.

Sec. 58-442. Declaration of necessity.

It is found and declared that:

- (1) The making and creation of excessive, unnecessary or unusually loud noises within the county limits is a condition which has existed for some time and the amount and intensity of such noises is increasing.
- (2) The making, creation or maintenance of such excessive, unnecessary, unnatural or unusually loud noises which are prolonged, unusual and unnatural in their time, place and effect of use affect are a detriment to the public health, comfort, convenience, safety, welfare and prosperity of the residents of the county.
- (3) The necessity in the public interest for the provisions and prohibitions contained and enacted in this article is declared as a matter of legislative determination and public policy, and it is further declared that the provisions and prohibitions contained and enacted in this article are in pursuance of and for the purpose of securing and promoting the public health, comfort, safety, welfare and repose of the county and its inhabitants.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-443. Penalty for violation of article.

Violations of this article are punishable as provided in section 1-8.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-444. General prohibitions.

- (a) No person shall make, continue, permit, or cause to be made or continued:
 - (1) Any unreasonably loud and raucous noise; or
 - (2) Any noise which unreasonably disturbs, injures, or endangers the comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of reasonable persons of ordinary sensitivity; or
 - (3) Any noise which exceeds the maximum allowable limits set forth in this article.
- (b) Factors which shall be considered in determining whether a violation of subsection (a) above exists shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (1) The volume of the noise;
 - (2) The intensity of the noise;
 - (3) The volume and intensity of the background noise, if any;
 - (4) The nature and zoning of the area from which the sound emanates and the area where it is received or perceived;
 - (5) The duration of the noise;
 - (6) The time of the day or night the noise occurs; and
 - (7) Whether the noise is recurrent, intermittent, or constant.
 - (8) Whether a noise complaint, as set forth in section 58-446, has been received by the county.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-445. Specific acts considered to be unreasonably loud and raucous noise.

Any of the following acts and causes thereof are presumed to be in violation of this chapter and to constitute unreasonably loud and raucous noise. This enumeration does not constitute an exclusive list:

- (1) *Radios, televisions, boomboxes, stereos, musical instruments, drums or similar devices.* Operating, playing or permitting the operation or playing of any radio, television, boombox, stereo, musical instrument, drum or similar device which produces or reproduces sound in such a manner as to be unreasonably loud and raucous, or in such a manner as to unreasonably disturb, injure, or endanger the comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of reasonable persons of ordinary sensitivity.
- (2) *Radios, televisions, boomboxes, stereos, musical instruments, drums or similar devices in/on any vehicle or by pedestrian.* Operating, playing or permitting the operation or playing of any radio, television, boombox, stereo, musical instrument, drum or similar device, which is located in or on any vehicle or by any pedestrian on publicly owned land or a public parking lot, which produces or reproduces sound in such a manner as to be unreasonably loud and raucous, or in such a manner as to unreasonably disturb, injure, or endanger the comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of reasonable persons of ordinary sensitivity.

-
- (3) *Loading and unloading.* Loading and unloading, opening, closing or other handling of boxes, crates, containers, equipment, building materials, garbage cans or similar objects between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on any day within a residential zone, provided that the noise is unreasonably loud and raucous, and can be heard across the property line of the property from which it emanates.
 - (4) *Fireworks.* Using, exploding, or permitting the use or explosion of fireworks, in such a manner as to be unreasonably loud and raucous, or in such a manner as to unreasonably disturb, injure, or endanger the comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of reasonable persons of ordinary sensitivity. For purposes of this section, the term "firework" shall have the same meaning as specified in F.S. § 791.01, as may be amended from time to time. However, the use or explosion of fireworks shall not be presumed unreasonably loud and raucous when said use or explosion is sponsored by a local government as part of a holiday, municipal or other commemorative event, or otherwise complies with Pinellas County Code, section 62-85, as that section may be amended, or if the use or explosion of fireworks occurs on July 4 or December 31, or within 24 hours of either such date.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-446. Noise complaints.

- (a) Noise complaints may be submitted in writing to the county by any citizen and shall include the name, address, and telephone number of the complainant, as well as the address, to the extent known, of the person responsible for the loud and raucous noise, and a description of the noise. The written complaint shall be in the form of an affidavit, made under oath before an individual authorized by law to take acknowledgements.
- (b) Upon receiving two or more complaints as described in subsection (a) involving loud and raucous noise, from complainants residing at separate addresses, the county will issue a notice of violation to the person responsible for the loud and raucous noise, advising that person of the alleged noise and that immediate steps must be taken to abate the noise. The notice of violation will describe the noise complaint, and will provide a seven-day period within which to correct the problem. If a second complaint is received in the same form as that described in subsection (a), after the seven-day notice period, then a citation may be issued.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-447. Exceptions.

Notwithstanding the noise prohibitions set out in this article, the following shall be permitted:

- (1) The operation of warning or emergency signal devices such as sirens, horns, and bells when utilized for their intended purpose.
- (2) Noises resulting from equipment or operations incidental to the emergency repair of facilities or restoration of services such as public utilities or other emergency activities in the public interest.
- (3) Ordinary noise created by the operation of railways, shipping lanes and aircraft.
- (4) Noises consistent with cultural, historical or traditional observances, holidays and ceremonies, provided that a permit for such event has been obtained from the county administrator, city manager or town manager in accordance with section 58-451.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-448. Waivers.

- (a) Applications for waivers for relief from the maximum allowable noise level limits designated in this article shall be made in writing. Such applications for waivers shall be made to the county administrator or his duly authorized representative when the activity creating such noise is located within the unincorporated area of the county or with the city manager or town manager when the activity is located within the boundaries of their respective municipality. Any waiver granted by the county administrator, a city manager or town manager under this section must be in writing and shall contain all conditions upon which such permit shall be effective. The county administrator, city manager or town manager or their duly authorized representatives may grant the waiver as applied for under the following conditions:
- (1) The county administrator, city manager or town manager may prescribe any reasonable conditions or requirements they deem necessary to minimize adverse effects upon the community or the surrounding neighborhood, including but not limited to the use of mufflers, screens or other sound attenuating devices.
 - (2) Waivers from maximum allowable noise level limits may only be granted for noises created within an industrial or commercial zone by operations which were in existence on the effective date of Ordinance [No. 03-3] from which this article derives.
 - (3) Waivers may be issued for no longer than 180 days, renewable by further application to the county administrator, city manager or town manager.
- (b) Any party feeling aggrieved by the denial of its application for waiver under this section by the county administrator may appeal such denial to the board of county commissioners, such appeal to be filed within 30 days from the date of denial.
- (c) Any party feeling aggrieved by the denial of its application for waiver by a city manager or a town manager may appeal such denial to the governing body of that municipality, such appeal to be filed within 30 days from the date of denial.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-449. Construction noise.

- (a) No person shall operate or permit to be operated any power-driven construction equipment without a muffler or other noise reduction device at least as effective as that recommended by the manufacturer or provided as original equipment.
- (b) No construction activities shall be permitted between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., Monday through Saturday, and all day Sunday, that produce noise exceeding 55 dBA, measured at the nearest property line of an adjacent residential area. Construction equipment that must be operated near a residentially zoned area on a 24-hour per day basis (i.e., pumps, well tips, generators, etc.) shall be shielded by an acoustical enclosure during the hours of 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. unless the unshielded noise level is less than 55 dBA, measured at the closest adjacent residentially zoned property line.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-450. Maximum allowable industrial or commercial noises.

- (a) In addition to the prohibitions set forth in section 58-444, no noise shall be created or permitted to be created in an industrial or commercial zone which exceeds those levels given in table 2, below, as measured on the adjacent property line.

Table 2. Maximum Noise Levels Permitted in Industrial and Commercial Zones

Zone from which noise emanates	Adjoining commercial zone (no time limit)	Adjoining residential zone 7:00 a.m.—11:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday
Industrial	72 dBA	66 dBA
Commercial	66 dBA	60 dBA

The maximum permitted noise level emanating from a commercially or industrially zoned district, measured at the nearest adjacent residentially zoned property line for the hours between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., Monday through Saturday and during all hours of Sunday, shall be 55 dBA.

- (b) In cases of impulsive noises, the noise levels listed in subsection (a) of this section shall be increased by ten dBA (as measured on a sound level meter) during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, but shall not exceed the levels of table 2 during the period from 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., Monday through Saturday and all day Sunday.
- (c) Exceptions to maximum noise levels.
 - (1) An exception to the noise levels listed in table 2 may be permitted by the granting of a waiver, under circumstances in which the activity creating the noise is of such importance to the public welfare, health or safety that the activity cannot be shut down, even though its noise levels exceed those given in table 2. Responsibility for the granting of such waivers shall lie with the county administrator or his duly authorized representative when the activity creating such noise is located within the unincorporated area of the county or with the city manager or town manager when the activity is located within the boundaries of their respective municipality.
 - (2) A further exception to the noise levels listed in table 2 shall be permitted in instances where an industry or commercial business had in prior years established its place of business in an area away from a residential zone, and subsequently, through the encroachment of residential development or rezoning, now finds itself adjoining a residential zone. In instances of this latter nature, the noise ordinance pertaining to industrial-commercial boundaries shall govern, and the business shall not be required to meet those noise levels pertaining to residential boundaries.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-451. Maximum allowable noises created within residential zones.

- (a) Except for those noises otherwise specifically provided for within this article, and in addition to the prohibitions set forth in section 58-444 it shall be unlawful to create or to permit to be created any noise within a residential zone that exceeds 72 dBA during the hours between 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., or 55 dBA during the hours between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., daily, measured at the nearest adjacent property line.
- (b) It shall be unlawful to operate or permit to be operated any air conditioning, heating or ventilating unit at any time that produces a noise exceeding 60 dBA, measured at the nearest adjacent property line.
- (c) In the case of multifamily dwelling units, it shall be unlawful to create or permit to be created any noise that exceeds 55 dBA during the hours between 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., or 40 dBA during the hours between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., daily, measured from a neighbor's dwelling.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-452. Noises emanating from boats or barges on water areas adjoining residential zones.

- (a) No person shall operate, or give permission for the operation of, any boat or barge on the waters of the county, including the Florida Intracoastal Waterway, in such a manner as to exceed a maximum sound level of 90 dBA at a distance of 50 feet from the boat or barge.
- (b) Any person who refuses to submit to a sound level test when requested to do so by a law enforcement officer is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in [F.S.] § 775.082 or § 775.083.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-453. Noises within outdoor public recreation areas and parks.

It shall be unlawful to operate or permit to be operated any mechanical or electrical device within an outdoor public recreation area or park that produces a noise exceeding 72 dBA during the hours between 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m., or 55 dBA during the hours between 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m., daily, measured at the nearest adjacent residentially zoned property line, except for planned community events, including but not limited to concerts, speeches, sporting events, fireworks displays, etc. When a planned community event will create noise in excess of the limits specified in this section, a permit must be obtained prior to the event.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Sec. 58-454. Octave band sound level limits.

In addition to the standards listed in this article, for any source or sound which can be detected on any parcel of property adjacent to the source or sound, the maximum allowable sound level limit for the individual octave bands whose centers are 31.5, 63, 125, 250, and 500 Hertz shall not exceed 65 dB.

(Ord. No. 03-3, § 1, 1-7-03)

Secs. 58-455—58-470. Reserved.