

**IS YOUR BUILDING FITTED WITH AN
AUDIBLE ALARM SYSTEM?
IF SO, THIS INFORMATION IS IMPORTANT TO YOU.**

What is the issue?

There have been a number of complaints received by Council in recent months about audible alarms sounding as a result of either accidental activation or faulty systems. These incidents are very disturbing to residents up to a kilometre outside the Industrial Area, particularly when they occur at night and the alarm is allowed to sound needlessly for prolonged periods.

What are my legal obligations?

The *Environmental Protection Act 1986* creates an offence where a person:

- emits or causes to be emitted unreasonable noise (penalty of up to **\$62,500** plus a daily penalty of up to **\$12,500** for a continuing offence);
- *intentionally or with criminal negligence* emits or causes to be emitted unreasonable noise (penalty of up to \$125,000 plus a daily penalty of up to **\$25,000** for a continuing offence); and
- uses or causes or *allows to be used* any equipment in such a way as to cause or *allow it to emit* unreasonable noise (penalty of up to **\$5,000**).

The Act also provides that, where an alarm is emitting unreasonable noise and has been sounding for an excessive time, a Police Officer may, using reasonable force and with assistance if necessary, disable that alarm.

What is unreasonable noise?

Unreasonable noise is defined by the Act as noise which is emitted in contravention of the Act or its subsidiary legislation **or** unreasonably interferes with the health, welfare, convenience, comfort or amenity of any person.

What should I do?

If you have an audible alarm fitted at your premises:

- be as certain as you can that it is not subject to accidental activation;

- ask yourself whether a siren of that volume **is** the most effective deterrent, or whether a direct link to a security company or your home may be more effective in actually apprehending illicit intruders; and
- if a siren is essential, ensure that its volume is as low as will achieve its purpose and that it is set to switch off after a short period (say four or five minutes).

How can I get more information?

If you want to know more, please telephone the City's Health Department on 9399 0111 and ask for the District Environmental Health Officer for your area.