

Power boat sports on waterways

Noise from power boats and jet skis (personal watercraft) on waterways, may disturb other people and result in complaints. If sufficiently audible it can interrupt sleep, or interfere with normal daily activities. Continual, loud noise can impact on people's health and lifestyle. This fact sheet aims to help residents and waterway users to manage noise and to meet legal requirements.

The law

Under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, noise restrictions apply to the use of power boats and personal watercraft. This aims to strike a balance for people living on and near waterways and motorised watercraft users.

Council of the City of Gold Coast (Council) is legally required to enforce the noise restrictions and can issue on-the spot fines to the value of 15 penalty units (for an individual) or 75 penalty units (for a corporation), if investigations find an offence. See the City website for information about penalty unit values.

Allowable noise limits

A person must not use a power boat, or permit the use of a power boat, in a waterway for a power boat sport if the use makes audible noise for the same affected building for more than a continuous period of two minutes:

- on a business day or Saturday, before 7am or after 7pm
- on any other day, before 8am or after 6:30pm.

Power boat sport means:

(a) a sport in which a person is towed by a line attached to a power boat, including a person water skiing or riding on a toboggan or tube.

(b) operating a jet ski or other power driven personal watercraft, other than for fishing.

Under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, Council can investigate noise complaints and fines apply.

Ways you can reduce noise

Limit hours of use

Avoid using your power boat or jet ski in the early morning when people are sleeping, or late afternoon and evening when conditions are usually calm and noise travels further.

Location

Try to stay away from homes so the noise does not disturb other people using the waterway or living in the area. If you do operate near these areas, limit your time in the one location, to reduce the noise impacts on the same residents.

Select a 'quiet' product

Older two-stroke powerboat models may create more noise than the new type of quieter four-stroke motors.

Know the marine safety laws

Maritime Safety Queensland regulate the safety and operation of power boats which include:

- 'wave jumping' and 'freestyling' - erratic and non-directional driving
- skiing or towing
- exceeding speed limits
- operating power boats close to people in the water, moored vessels, jetties, boat ramps or pontoons, or the shore.

Boat ramp restrictions

Council has introduced a Local Law to help reduce noise impacts on residents who live close to boat ramps. Under Council's *Subordinate Local Law No. 7.1 (Jetties and Boat Ramps) 2008*, running a personal watercraft motor 'out-of-water' is prohibited at these boat ramps:

- Jasmine Avenue, Hollywell
- Holly Avenue, Hollywell
- Naples Avenue, Isle of Capri
- Birt Avenue, Budds Beach
- Carrara Road, Carrara
- Tallawood Road, Coomera
- Howard Street, Runaway Bay
- West Pacific Motorway, Oxenford
- Harley Park Boat Ramp, Marine Parade, Labrador
- Lands End' Boat Ramp, Ray Street, Runaway Bay.

For information on marine safety laws, contact Maritime Safety Queensland or go to www.msq.qld.gov.au

For more information

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