

Sec. 12-14. - Regulation of noise.

- (a) *Statement of purpose.* The purpose of this section is to carry out and effectuate the public policy of the State of Connecticut, the federal government and the city concerning the regulation of those activities causing measurably excessive noise and noise disturbance within the city limits of the City of Danbury. A second purpose is to protect the safety, health and general welfare of all its citizens as the people have a right to and should be ensured an environment free from excessive noise which may jeopardize their general welfare and quality of life.
- (b) *Enforcement.* In recognition of the rights of free peoples to perform their daily activities without undue governmental interference, enforcement of this section shall be in accordance with specified guidelines indicated and delineated in subsection (e) herein.
- (c) *Definitions.* The following definitions shall apply in the interpretation and enforcement of this section:
- (1) *Residential zone.* Single-family residence zones and multifamily residence zones, as defined by the zoning regulations of the city, and all uses associated therewith, either permitted as of right or as specially excepted uses.
  - (2) *Commercial zone.* General commercial zones, light commercial zones, neighborhood commercial zones, all as defined in the zoning regulations of the city, and all uses associated therewith, either permitted as of right or as specially excepted uses.
  - (3) *Industrial zone.* Industrial district, as defined by the zoning regulations of the city.
  - (4) *Impulse noise.* Sound of short duration, usually less than one second, with an abrupt onset and rapid decay.
  - (5) *Daytime hours.* Hours between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and the hours 10:00 a.m. through 8:00 p.m. on Sundays and holidays.
  - (6) *Nighttime hours.* The hours between 8:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m., Sunday evening through Saturday morning, except that "night" shall mean the hours between 8:00 p.m. Saturday and 10:00 a.m. on Sunday and 8:00 p.m. of the day preceding a recognized, national holiday and 10:00 a.m. on said holiday.
  - (7) *Decibel.* A logarithmic unit of measurement used in measuring magnitudes of sound. The symbol is dB.
  - (8) *Motor vehicle.* Defined as per section 14-1(47) of the Connecticut General Statutes.
  - (9) *Noise.* Any excessive sound or disturbance, the intensity of which exceeds the standards set forth in subsection (e) of this section.
  - (10) *Noise level.* The sound pressure level in decibels as measured with a sound level meter using the A-weighting network. The level so read is designated dB(A) or dBA.
  - (11) *Person.* Any individual, firm, partnership, association, syndicate, company, trust, corporation, agency or administrative subdivision of the state or other legal entity of any kind.
  - (12) *Premises.* Any building, structure, land or portion thereof, including all appurtenances, and shall include yards, lots, courts, inner yards and real properties without buildings or improvements owned or controlled by a person.
  - (13) *Property line.* That real or imaginary line along the ground surface and its vertical extension which separates real property owned or controlled by any person from contiguous real property owned or controlled by another person, and separates real property from the public right-of-way.
  - (14) *Sound.* A transmission of energy through solid, liquid or gaseous media in the form of vibrations which constitute alterations in pressure or position of the particles in the medium and which in air evoke physiological sensations, including, but not limited to, an auditory response when impinging on the ear.
  - (15)

*Sound level meter.* An instrument to take sound level measurements and which should conform, as a minimum, to the operational specifications of the American National Standards Institute for sound level meters.

- (16) *Domestic power equipment.* Equipment including, but not limited to, power saws, snow removal equipment, drills, grinders, lawn and garden tools and other domestic power equipment intended for use in residential areas by a homeowner.
- (17) *Construction.* Any site preparation, assembly, erection, substantial repair, alteration, or similar action, but excluding demolition, for or of private rights-of-way, structures, utilities or similar property.
- (18) *Emergency work.* Any work made necessary to restore property to a safe condition following an emergency, or work required to protect persons or property from exposure to imminent danger.
- (19) *Muffler.* A device for abating sounds such as escaping gases.
- (d) *General prohibition.* It shall be unlawful for any person within the city to make, continue or cause to be made or continued any loud, unnecessary, unusual or excessive noise, or any noise which either annoys, disturbs, injures or endangers the comfort, repose, health, peace or safety of others within the limits of the city as provided in subsection (e) herein.

The following are acts specifically prohibited under this subsection (d):

- (1) Commercial construction, demolition, excavation and building operations before 7:00 a.m. Monday through Friday, before 8:00 a.m. Saturday, before 10:00 a.m. Sunday, and after 8:00 p.m. any day.
- (2) Vehicle horns. No person shall at any time sound any horn or other audible signal device of a motor vehicle exceeding the standards set forth in subsection (e) hereof, unless it is necessary as a warning to prevent or avoid a traffic accident.
- (3) The creation within the city of any excessive noise, exceeding the standards set forth in subsection (e) hereof, in the vicinity of any school, institution of learning, church, court, hospital or nursing home while the same is in use which impacts the workings of such institution or which disturbs or unduly annoys patients in the hospital, provided conspicuous signs are displayed at or near such building indicating that the same is a school, institution of learning, church, court, hospital or nursing home.
- (e) *Noise zone standards.* This subsection is intended to conform to the regulations of the State of Connecticut applicable to the control of noise, as set forth in Connecticut State Regulations section 22a-69-3.5 as amended. It shall be unlawful for any person to emit any noise that is in excess of the standards as follows:
  - (1) No person in a Class C noise zone shall emit noise exceeding the levels stated herein and applicable to adjacent noise zones.

	Receptor			
	C	B	A/day	A/night
Class C (Industrial) Emitter to	70 dBA	66dBA	61dBA	51dBA

Levels emitted in excess of the values listed above shall be considered excessive noise.

- (2) No person in Class B noise zone shall emit noise exceeding the levels state herein and applicable to adjacent noise zones:

	Receptor			
	C	B	A/day	A/night
Class B (Commercial) Emitter to	62 dBA	62dBA	55dBA	45dBA

Levels emitted in excess of the values listed above shall be considered excessive noise.

- (3) No person in Class A noise zone shall emit noise exceeding the levels state herein and applicable to adjacent noise zones:

	Receptor			
	C	B	A/day	A/night
Class A (Residential) Emitter to	62 dBA	55dBA	55dBA	45dBA

Levels emitted in excess of the values listed above shall be considered excessive noise.

No person shall cause or allow the emission of impulse noise in excess of eighty (80) decibels peak sound pressure level during the nighttime to any residential noise zone. No person shall cause or allow the emission of impulse noise in excess of one hundred (100) decibels peak sound pressure level at any time in any zone.

Measurements shall be taken at a point that is located about one (1) foot beyond the boundary of the emitter's premises within the receptor's premises. The emitter's premises include his/her individual unit of land or ground of contiguous parcels under the same ownership as indicated by public land records.

(f) *Motor vehicle noise.*

- (1) All motor vehicles operated within the city limits of the city shall be subject to the noise standards and decibels levels set forth in the regulations authorized in sections 14-80a-1a through 14-80a-10a inclusive of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.
- (2) No sound amplifying devices on or within motor vehicles shall emit noise in excess of the noise levels as specified in subsection (e) hereof.

(g) *Exclusions.* Maximum noise levels established pursuant to subsection (e) hereof shall not apply to any noise emitted by or related to:

- (1) Natural phenomenon.
- (2) Any bell or chime from any building clock, school or church.
- (3) Any siren, whistle or bell lawfully used by emergency vehicles or any other alarm system used in an emergency situation; provided, however, that burglar alarms not terminating within thirty (30) minutes after being activated shall be unlawful and shall not be excluded hereunder.
- (4) Warning devices required by OSHA or other state or federal safety regulations.

- (5) Noise created as a result of an emergency.
  - (6) Noise generated by engine-powered or motor-driven lawn care or maintenance equipment between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. provided that noise discharged from exhausts is adequately muffled to prevent loud and/or explosive noises therefrom.
  - (7) Recreational or celebratory activities specifically licensed or under permit from the City of Danbury, including, but not limited to, parades, sporting events, concerts, patriotic or public celebrations and fireworks displays.
  - (8) Noises created by snow removal equipment provided that such equipment is maintained in good repair so as to minimize noise and noise discharged from exhausts shall be adequately muffled to prevent loud and/or explosive noise therefrom.
  - (9) Noise that originates at airports that is directly caused by aircraft flight operations specifically preempted by the Federal Aviation Administration.
  - (10) Governmental activities which may be exempted by law or regulation of the City of Danbury and State of Connecticut.
- (h) *Penalties.* Any persons in violation of any of the provisions of this section shall be fined in the amount of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for their first violation; fifty dollars (\$50.00) for a subsequent violation occurring within thirty (30) days of their first violation; and seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) for any subsequent violation occurring within thirty (30) days of any previous violation not including their first violation occurring pursuant to this subsection. Each day such violation continues after the time for correction of the violation has been given in an order shall constitute a separate violation. Notification of violation shall be given at the time of the occurrence of the noise or shortly thereafter in the form of a written notice of violation.
- (i) *Enforcement.* The Danbury Police Department, as directed by the chief of police, shall enforce the provisions of this section pertaining to the measurement of noise levels and the issuance of notices of violation.
- (j) *Variances.* Any person living or doing business in the city may apply to the common council for a variance from one or more of the provisions of this section.
- (k) *Effect of these provisions.* All provisions of the zoning regulations of the city which are more stringent than those set forth herein shall remain in full force and effect and shall prevail over inconsistent provisions hereof.

(Code 1925, § 139; Ord. No. 346, 6-2-87; Ord. No. 543, 5-2-2000; Ord. No. 655, 6-6-06)