

Air Pollution

Septic Tank Odour

Odour from septic tanks can affect neighbours and interfere with their normal activities. If severe enough, it can impact on people's health.

The law

Council investigates most odour emissions using the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*. Some sites have a development approval with conditions. Council investigates complaints about these sites using the *Planning Act 2016*.

How to reduce septic tank odour

- perform regular maintenance on your septic tank system and pump it out when needed
- don't put paint, hazardous chemicals, pet bath water or sanitary napkins down the drain
- don't wash grease, fats and oils down kitchen sink
- ensure trenches and effluent irrigation system is working correctly and not leaking or ponding effluent over the ground
- ensure there are no cracks in tank lid or grease trap

How Council handles complaints

As part of the investigation, Council will consider:

- whether the site has a development approval with a condition specific to odour
- the amount being emitted
- the duration and rate of emission and the characteristics and qualities
- environmental sensitivities
- views of any other neighbours or complainants
- whether the person responsible has already taken reasonable action to manage odour emissions.

If an odour emission is unlawful, Council may issue a fine to the value of 15 penalty units (individual) or 75 penalty units (corporation).

Complaints

In most cases, the best way to resolve an odour issue is through polite and productive communication between yourself and the person causing the odour nuisance. If you haven't already spoken with the person about the issue, we recommend you try this approach first.

You could also download the Environmental Nuisance letter from our [website](#), and place it in their letterbox. If you have concerns about approaching or entering communication, or these measures have proven ineffective, you can lodge a complaint with Council by:

- ☎ **Phone:** (07) 5329 6500
- ✉ **Email:** mail@noosa.qld.gov.au
- ♿ **Council Office:** 9 Pelican Street, Tewantin

You will need to provide:

- your name, address and phone number (kept confidential)
- details of the emission, including source address and the date and time it starts

To help you keep track of the details of the emissions, it is a good idea to fill out a daily log that you can submit with your complaint

Complaints not investigated by Council

- An environmentally relevant activity regulated by the Department of Environment and Science (e.g. chemical manufacturing).
- An environmentally relevant activity regulated by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (e.g. poultry farming).
- A state or local government premises or activity. This is the responsibility of the Department of Environment and Science.