

Guidelines to Property Managers for Formulation of their House-rules to Protect the Environment

These Guidelines outline general requirements and advice on common environmental matters associated with property management. Through observing these guidelines, property management companies, property owners and residents would help to minimize the generation of nuisance and to reduce pollution at sources. Property Managers are advised to make reference to these guidelines in formulating house-rules to suit their specific property developments.

1. General Property Management

- 1.1 Obtain licence under Water Pollution Control Ordinance for effluent discharge from communal facilities, e.g. Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), swimming pool.
- 1.2 Avoid pollution/nuisance arising from operation of communal facilities, such as STP, grease trap and refuse collection point.
- 1.3 Site communal facilities to avoid nuisance, e.g. refuse collection point not be sited in the vicinity of lift lobbies or any fresh air intake of the air conditioning system to avoid odour problem.
- 1.4 Schedule the operation to avoid nuisance, e.g. cleaning of facilities, refuse/grease trap waste collection with powered machines and loading/unloading of goods in hours causing minimal noise and odour disturbance to people in the vicinity.

2. Management of Communal Facilities

- 2.1 Communal Domestic STP
 - Maintain and operate the STP to meet the effluent discharge licence conditions.
 - Set up an effective system to monitor the performance and maintenance work of the contractor / operators.
 - Formulate mitigation measures to cater emergency situation of the STP. Ensure operation and maintenance manual of STP easily accessible to concerned personnel.
 - Adopt good housekeeping practices (e.g. clean and non-obstructed walkways, adequate lighting and ventilation) for the STP.

- 2.2. Communal Grease Trap
- Maintain and operate the grease trap to meet the effluent discharge licence conditions.
 - Engage registered grease trap waste collector for the regular clearance of grease trap waste.
 - Properly archive cleaning records.
- 2.3 Refuse Collection Point
- Direct effluent from cleansing of refuse containers and bins to foul drain.
 - Prevent effluent from discharging to gully traps, e.g. avoid washing containers and bins in open area.
- 2.4 Refuse Chute
- Take measures to avoid noise nuisance arising from falling refuse bumping on refuse chute, e.g. placing rubber pad or similar material at the bends to reduce impact noise or avoid using refuse chute during late evening or early morning.
- 2.5 Swimming Pool
- Direct effluent from routine operation (e.g. back washing) to foul drain.
 - Direct effluent from annual cleaning to storm drain.
- 2.6 Pump Room and Associated Piping
- Adopt measures to avoid excessive noise transmitted through building structure, e.g.
 - proper isolation to minimize structural borne noise;
 - appropriate pressure reducing valve to minimize noise caused by water rushing into water tanks.
 - Conduct regular preventive maintenance to avoid noise caused by defective parts.
 - Employ acoustic consultant/contractor to tackle difficult and complicated noise problems.
- 2.7 Lift Plant Room
- Adopt measures such as proper isolation to avoid excessive noise transmitted through building structure.
 - Conduct regular preventive maintenance to avoid noise caused by defective parts.
 - Employ acoustic consultant/contractor to tackle difficult and complicated noise problems.

- 2.8 Ventilating system (chillers, water cooling towers, exhaust fans, etc.)
- Carefully locate the system to minimize noise and air pollution nuisance.
 - Conduct regular preventive maintenance to avoid noise caused by defective parts.
 - Install suitable noise barriers, enclosures and silencers to reduce the air-borne noise as appropriate.
 - Install suitable vibration isolation device to abate the structural borne noise as appropriate.
 - Employ acoustic consultant/contractor to tackle difficult and complicated noise problems.
- 2.9 Emergency Generator
- Obtain pre-approval from the Director of Environmental Protection Department for installation of generator with nominal fuel consumption exceeding 25 litres per hour of liquid fuel or 1,150 megajoules per hour of gaseous fuel.
 - Conduct testing in hours specified in the approval.
 - Apply proper noise abatement measure to reduce nuisance caused by regular testing of the generators.
- 2.10 Carparks
- Ensure adequate ventilation inside indoor carparks.
 - Locate exhaust outlets away from any openable windows or fresh air intakes of the buildings.
- 2.11 Shopping Mall/Commercial Complex/Club House
- Properly operate and maintain any communal wastewater treatment facility to meet requirements of the discharge licence.
 - Properly operate and maintain any communal air pollution abatement facility.
 - Properly locate all exhaust outlets so that emissions can be effectively dispersed to avoid nuisance to people in the vicinity.
 - Restrict the use of loudspeakers in shops for attracting attention to their goods to avoid causing nuisance.

2.12 Venue for noise generating entertainment facilities (such as bars, karaoke and discos)

- Site such facilities away from residential dwellings.
- Main door preferable be within building structure and open to the interior of the building or screened from residential dwellings.
- Require installation of double-leaf noise insulation doors and double-glazed noise insulation windows as appropriate for venue with main door or windows opened to the exterior of the building.
- Require for reducing the music volume during sensitive hours, effective sound insulation and anti-vibration treatments as appropriate.

3. Owner and Occupier's Responsibilities

3.1 Noise Nuisance

- Do not generate noise which causes annoyance to any person during night time (11pm to 7am) or at any time on a general holiday.
- Keep air-conditioner or any ventilation system in good condition so that it would not emit excessive noise affecting neighbours.
- At any time, do not make noise nuisance when carrying out the following activities:
 - (a) Playing any musical or other instrument, including record or cassette player or radio or television;
 - (b) Using any loudspeaker, megaphone, or other device or instrument for magnifying sound;
 - (c) Playing any game or engaging in any pastime;
 - (d) Carrying on a trade or business;
 - (e) Keeping any animal or bird that can make noise.
- Owners should ensure that any intruder alarm system installed in their premises shall not sound more than 15 minutes after being activated.
- Car owners should ensure that any intruder alarm system installed in their vehicles shall not sound unless it is physically being tampered with and shall not sound more than 5 minutes after being triggered.

3.2 Proper Use of Sewerage

- Avoid pouring oil and grease to sewer or toilet.
- Do not dump solid waste into sewer.
- Avoid disposing chemicals (e.g. paint and thinner) into drain.
- Always try to screen out solid residue from wastewater before discharge into drain.
- Do not discharge wastewater to storm water drain.

3.3 Communal Drainage System

- Properly maintain drainage system with regular checking.
- Ensure sewer drain is not connected to storm drain.
- Adopt good practice to prevent misconnection, including, but not exclusively, the use of manhole covers with different standard patterns for storm drain and foul sewers, engage competent and qualified contractor for sewer work, and maintain updated drainage record.

3.4 Waste Disposal

- Dispose of solid waste in a proper manner so as to avoid pollution to the environment.
- Separate recyclable materials from other types of waste for recycling.

3.5 Poultry, Pets and Dogs

- Owner keeping domestic pets should avoid pets causing nuisance to neighbours.
- Never keep poultry (such as chicken, duck, goose, pigeon and quail) in a premises.

4. Renovation Work

4.1 Air

- When using spray paint or volatile solvent indoor, remember to maintain good ventilation, but keep the main door closed to avoid malodour from affecting your neighbours.
- When demolishing walls or drilling holes with electric drill, use vacuum cleaner to remove dust and fine particles.
- When operating circular saw and electric drill, use vacuum cleaner to remove sawdust and fine particles.
- Properly cover debris during temporary storage.

4.2 Noise

- Unless permission has been obtained from the Environmental Protection Department, renovation contractors should not use powered mechanical equipment or perform works such as hammering and debris transportation between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. or at any time on a general holiday.
- Devise suitable house rules such as requiring owners to apply for renovation permits before commencing any renovation works, restricting the use of particularly noisy equipment, requiring the use of quieter method and controlling the working hours.

- Make residents aware of the house rules for controlling noise from renovation work.
- Avoid noisy renovation work before 9 a.m..
- Inform neighbours regarding the working schedule of renovation work.
- Avoid operating a number of powered mechanical equipment at one time.

4.3 Wastewater

- Do not discharge polluted water to storm drain.
- Do not dump chemicals (e.g. paint and thinner) into drain.
- If drainage work is required, make sure the renovation contractor does not misconnect the foul water drain to storm water drain.

4.4 Waste

- Properly keep surplus chemicals (e.g. paint and thinner) for reuse.
- Separate recyclable materials (e.g. carton boxes) from other types of waste for recycling.
- Dispose of debris, aggregates and renovation waste at rubble collection point in the housing estate.
- If there is no rubble collection point in the housing estate, the renovation contractor should dispose of debris and aggregates at public dumping areas and wastes at landfills.

5. Waste Recovery in Housing Estates

- To provide appropriate and sufficient waste separation and recovery facilities including, but not limited to, waste separation bins at common area convenient to the residents.
- To ensure the waste separation and recovery facilities do not cause any fire hazard and are placed in locations not causing obstruction to any fire escape route.
- To put a rubbish bin beside each set of waste separation bins for disposal of non-recyclables.
- To maintain waste separation and recovery facilities in clean and working condition, replace damaged or discolored labels.
- To promote waste separation by displaying posters at conspicuous locations.
- To inform residents not to put contaminated wastes such as used personal hygiene products into the waste separation bins.
- To arrange timely emptying of waste separation bins to avoid overflowing of the bins.

- To store the collected recyclables properly to facilitate subsequent transfer to recyclers
- To ensure the collected recyclables are sent for recycling
- To keep proper record of all recyclables collection and transfer transactions
- To notify the residents of alternative arrangement in case the waste separation bins have to be temporarily removed or relocated due to various reasons such as building renovation
- To review the recovery results regularly and organize publicity campaigns to improve awareness and participation of the residents