



ODOUR NUISANCE - GENERAL

Odour can cause a nuisance to neighbours and interfere with their normal daily activities. If severe enough, it can impact on people's health. In a residential situation, odour can come from numerous sources, including compost heaps, rotting vegetation, fertilisers and rubbish. This fact sheet includes information that may assist residents to reduce odour and meet legal requirements.

Be a Good Neighbour

Take the time to talk to neighbours. Find out what concerns they may have and ask for suggestions about solving any problems. In many cases an agreement can be reached that satisfies everyone's needs.

The Law

The *Environmental Protection Act 1994* introduced by the State Government include controls for odour. Council is legally required to enforce these controls when odour problems occur from residential properties. If issues between neighbours cannot be resolved and further complaints are made, Council officers will investigate.

The Criteria

When investigating a spray drift complaint, Council will consider:

- The amount of spray, contaminant or pollutant being emitted;
- The duration and rate of emission and the emissions characteristics and qualities;
- The sensitivity of the environment into which the drift is being emitted and the impact that it has had or may have; and
- Views of any other neighbours or complainants.

Ways to reduce odour emissions

1) Good Housekeeping

Keep your property tidy and do not allow vegetation or rubbish to accumulate. This will prevent material from rotting and creating an odour. Take the time to bag or



wrap all rubbish and dispose of it properly. Minimise rubbish by composting and mulching organic waste and garden clippings and recycling plastic, glass, paper and cans.

2) Observing weather conditions

If possible, consider the weather conditions before starting work that will create odour. For example, when working with fertilisers, try to schedule work when the weather is fine rather than in gusty or strong winds. Odour complaints are more frequent in summer as people are outdoors more often and houses are left open for ventilation. Remember, do not fertilise gardens in wet weather, as run-off to stormwater drains is harmful to creeks and rivers.

3) Physical barriers

Where possible, enclose or cover compost bins or piles of vegetation. Compost also requires regular turning and aerating. This may help to reduce odour problems.

4) Water use

Spraying of water onto fertiliser may help it break down quicker and absorb into the topsoil more rapidly. It is important that enough water is used to keep the topsoil layer damp and that spraying is completed before strong breezes develop.

For further information, please call Council's Environmental Health Section on 1300 79 49 29.

