# LOCAL NUISANCE AND LITTER CONTROL

Odour

## WHAT IS ODOUR NUISANCE?

Airborne pollution such as dust, smoke and odours, are collectively known as aerosols. Aerosols (or a combination of aerosols), can cause a local nuisance to the community.

Furthermore, aerosols can do more than just interfere with normal daily activities. If severe enough, they have the potential to cause damage to property and impact negatively upon a person's health.

## WHAT ARE ODOURS AND WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

Odours are the properties of a substance that we can detect by smell. Since odours can travel through the air over long distances, they have the potential to affect many people within a community, cause significant impact on people's lives and adversely affect the amenity of an area.

Perceptions of odours can be very subjective. A smell may be pleasant to one person, yet unpleasant to another, which can make the assessment of odours difficult to achieve. The degree to which odour nuisance affects people depends on the sensitivity of their sense of smell, the state of their health, previous experience with the odour, and their tolerance of the odours in question.

Odours can emanate from a range of domestic and commercial/ industrial sources. Domestic sources of odours include:

- insanitary conditions.
- dirty or poorly maintained rubbish bins and waste receptacles
- uncovered compost heaps.
- rotting vegetation or food scraps (particularly sea-food)
- storage of petrochemicals (oils, degreasers, kerosene).

## HOW CAN ODOUR NUISANCE BE REDUCED OR MITIGATED?

From a commercial or industrial perspective, odour impacts can be mitigated by good design, good management, and by adequately separating odour sources from people or communities (often called sensitive receptors or receivers) which may be adversely affected by the odour.

Domestically, there are many ways to reduce the likelihood of producing an odour nuisance, such as:

- minimise rubbish on a premises
- ensure composting and mulching is done properly to avoid smells
- clean waste bins regularly to get rid of any accumulated or smelly waste
- ensure waste bins are collected regularly
- place meat and seafood scraps in the freezer and wait until the night before bin collection day to put them in the bin
- rinse containers before placing them in the bin to get rid of any remaining residues or substances that are likely to become putrid and cause odour
- be careful when storing and using chemicals, paints and other products, which may cause strong and offensive odours
- consider and observe weather conditions as that can contribute to causing an odour nuisance
- Other strategies to reduce likelihood of causing an odour nuisance include use of physical barriers, and the use of water (such as on fertilizer to quicken absorption into the topsoil).

## WHEN SHOULD I REPORT AN ODOUR NUISANCE?

In the first instance a person should try and discuss concerns with the people (e.g. neighbours) from where the nuisance is emanating from, as they may not be aware that they are causing a nuisance. Concerns should be raised and discussed, and suggestions provided to resolve problems. Often simple solutions can be found to satisfy everyone. Generally, we only become involved if an issue within the community (e.g. between neighbours) cannot be resolved or if the nuisance is a broad-scale issue involving multiple parties.

## HOW DO WE HANDLE ODOUR COMPLAINTS?

The City of PAE uses a gradated response to enforcement in line with our Enforcement Policy. The Enforcement Policy provides guidance to us

as to how and when enforcement mechanisms should be applied under the Act and to inform the community about how decisions on enforcement matters are made. A copy of the Enforcement Policy can be found on Council's website.

## WHAT DOES A COUNCIL CONSIDER WHEN INVESTIGATING AN ODOUR NUISANCE?

There are many factors that are taken into consideration when determining whether an odour is a nuisance. These factors may include, but are not limited to:

- frequency
- intensity
- duration
- offensiveness
- location

Generally, the greater the frequency, intensity, duration, or offensiveness of an odour, the more likely it is to cause a nuisance.

## MORE INFORMATION

This fact sheet is one of a range designed to increase your awareness and understanding of the requirements of the *Local Nuisance and Litter Control Act 2016*. Please see other fact sheets for further information about the Act. You can access more information on our website: cityofpae.sa.gov.au/live/public-and environmental-health/local-nuisance.