

NOISE ORDINANCE

TOWNSHIP ORDINANCE NO. 2 - 2008

**AN ORDINANCE DEFINING AND REGULATING NOISE IN CENTER TOWNSHIP,
GREENE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA.**

BE IT ENACTED and ORDAINED, and it is hereby enacted and ordained by the Board of Supervisors of Center Township, Greene County, Pennsylvania, as follows:

SECTION 1. TITLE. This Ordinance shall be known as the Center Township Noise Ordinance.

SECTION 2. AUTHORITY. This Ordinance is enacted pursuant to the Second Class Township Code.

SECTION 3. PURPOSE. The purpose of this ordinance is to ensure that public health, safety and welfare shall not be abridged by the making and creating of noise pollution or of public nuisances from disturbing, excessive or offensive noises in the Township. The residents of the Township recognize that uncontrolled noise represents a danger to the health and welfare of their neighbors and that each person in the community is entitled to live in an environment in which the level of excessive noise is minimized for the community good. It is the purpose and scope of this ordinance to provide regulations defining the maximum sound levels that vehicles, appliances and equipment shall be allowed to produce at specified distances from these devices, and also to provide for the prohibition of other kinds of offensive noises. Conversely, the Township recognizes the economic benefits to its residents and property owners

created by industrial and commercial enterprises, including oil, gas, coal, coal bed methane operations and other extractive activities, operating within the Township. The Township further recognizes that the safety of its residents and individuals engaged in these activities requires the use of vehicles, equipment and machinery which generate noise. These regulations and prohibitions are intended to balance and protect the physical, mental and social well-being of the residents of Center Township and these industrial and commercial endeavors.

SECTION 4. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. The Board of Supervisors finds that failure of individuals, businesses, industries, persons maintaining animals, social gatherings and other activities to regulate excessive noise emanating from their premises constitutes a violation of the peace and enjoyment of the residents of the Township and a public nuisance. Specifically, such excessive noise emanating from home occupations, businesses, industries, sound amplification equipment, radios, electronic sound recording equipment, vehicles, persons maintaining animals, social gatherings, and other activities:

A. Creates a nuisance in that residents are deprived of the enjoyment of their homes, disturbed in their sleep, and otherwise prevented from the quiet enjoyment of their residential premises;

B. Affects the property values of residences in the Township.

C. Affects the public welfare by reflecting negatively on the quality of life in residential areas of the Township;

D. Disturbs the peace and good order of the Township; and

E. Creates noise pollution.

SECTION 5. DEFINITIONS. The following words and phrases, when used in this Ordinance, shall have, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the meanings given to them in this Section.

a) All acoustical terminology shall be interpreted in accordance with that contained in ANSI S1.1, "Acoustical Terminology." All other words and terms not defined herein shall be used with a meaning of standard usage.

b) ANSI - American National Standards Institute, or its successors.

c) Code Enforcement Officer - The individual appointed by the Township Board of Supervisors to enforce the terms of this ordinance.

d) Decibel (dB) - A unit for measuring the volume of sound.

e) Excessive Noise - Excessive noise is that sound which is (1) injurious or which unreasonably interferes with the comfortable enjoyment of life and property. Measured noise levels in excess of limits established in these regulations or those specified in valid permits are declared to be excessive noise; (2) annoying to a person of ordinary sensibilities.

f) Night Time - 10:00 P.M. to 6:00 A.M., prevailing time, conversely, Day Time - 6:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M., prevailing time.

g) Noise - Any sound that annoys or disturbs humans or tends to cause an adverse psychological or physiological effect on humans.

h) Noise Level - Airborne sound levels expressed in dB and obtained by the use

of specific frequency dependent weighting networks, as specified in the referenced standards and indicated by proper notation. If A - weighted sound levels are employed, the sound level is identified as dB(A).

I) Noise Pollution - Noise of such loudness and character from a single source or from multiple sources, which is or may be predicted with reasonable certainty to be, injurious to health or which unreasonably interferes with the enjoyment of property or with any lawful business or activity. Noise Levels exceeding those permitted in any district shall constitute "noise pollution".

j) Period of Observation - The time interval during which acoustical data are obtained. The period of observation is determined by the characteristics of the noise being measured and the instrumentation being used. The period of observation must be at least as long as the response time of the instrumentation. The greater the variance in individual sound level, the longer must be the observation time for a given expected accuracy of measurement.

k) Person - Includes an individual, firm, association, organization, partnership, trust, company, corporation or any other similar entity.

l) Receiving Building - Any building used primarily for human habitation, sleeping, cultural, social, educational, recreational, religious or similar activities at which the maximum noise specified shall not be exceeded from sources outside the property upon which the building is located.

m) Sound Level - Noise level.

n) Sound Level Meter - An instrument or combination of instruments which meets or exceeds the requirements for an ANSI Type S1A or Type S2A Sound Level Meter.

o) Vehicle - Any device, or combination of devices, used for or capable of being used for transporting persons or property. Vehicles include, but are not limited to the following: automobiles, trucks, buses, motorcycles, motorized bicycles, snowmobiles, scooters, all-terrain vehicles, go-carts, racers, and life devices, farm machinery, industrial machinery, highway graders, trailers, graders and semi-trailers.

p) Township - Township of Center, Greene County, Pennsylvania.

SECTION 6. GENERAL NOISE LIMIT. No person shall create or allow the creation of any noise or operate or cause to be operated any source of sound on property owned, leased, occupied or otherwise controlled by such person, which causes the sound level, when measured at or beyond the boundaries of the lot, parcel, tract or property, on which such activities take place, to exceed the noise levels specified as follows, unless the owners of a lot, parcel or property has consented in writing to exceeding that level.

The maximum sound pressure level radiated in each standard octave band by any use of facility shall not exceed the values for octave bands lying within the several limits given in Table 4 after applying the corrections shown in Table 5.

TABLE 4

Frequency Ranges Containing Standard Octave Bands in Cycles Per Second	Octave Band Sound Pressure Level in Decibels re* 0.0002 dyne/cm ²
20 - 300	60
300 - 2,400	40
above - 2,400	30

TABLE 5

Type or Location or Operation or Character of Noise	Correction in Decibels
1. Daytime operation only	5
2. Noise source operated less than *	
A. 20% of any 1 hour period	5
B. 5% of any 1 hour period	10
3. Noise of impulsive character, hammering, etc.	-5
4. Noise of periodic character, hum, screech, etc.	-5
* Apply one of these correction only.	

SECTION 7. EXEMPTIONS. Noise emitted from the following sources shall be exempt from the noise standards specified herein:

A. All safety signals and warning devices (e.g. intrusion alarms, back-up alarms on trucks); authorized vehicles when responding to emergencies (e.g. police, fire, ambulance sirens or any other device used to alert persons to an emergency or used during the conduct of

emergency work).

B. The provision, repair and maintenance of municipal services or public utilities.

C. Bells, chimes and carillons used for religious purposes or in conjunction with national celebrations or public holidays.

D. Appliances, lawn and garden equipment, chain saws, snow removal equipment and power tools in use during daytime as defined herein, provided such are operated within the manufacturer's specifications and with all standard noise reducing equipment in use, unmodified, and in proper operating condition.

E. Heavy construction equipment when being used on a specific short term project (such as constructing a building; constructing, repairing or cleaning a road; and other similar short term, specific construction, demolition, or repair projects) in use during daytime as defined herein, for the duration of such short term, specific project; PROVIDED, such heavy construction equipment is operated within the manufacturer specifications and with all standard noise-reducing equipment in use, unmodified and in proper operating condition.

F. Air conditioners, fans, hearing units and similar comfort devices, provided such are operated within the manufacturer's specifications and with all standard noise reducing equipment in use, unmodified, and in proper operating condition.

G. Airplanes, helicopters and normal activities or properly licensed airports; and trains operating on railroads.

H. Musical, recreational and athletic events conducted by or permitted by schools, local government, community or community association or village festivals, or events sponsored by non-profit organizations.

I. Existing weapons firing ranges during day time as defined herein.

J. All motor vehicles being operated on the public road in the Township, provided such are operated within the manufacturer's specifications and with all standard noise reducing equipment in use, unmodified and in proper working condition.

K. Activities permitted by special waiver, as provided herein, according to the terms and conditions of said waiver.

L. All farm related operations and activities.

M. Any facilities of a legitimate or licensed business, commercial or industrial operation as the same (1) existed, or (2) permitted by applicable state and/or local agency, but not operating as permitted, as of the effective date of this ordinance, including but not limited to (1) coal mining facilities such as fan sites, portals and methane evacuation sites; and (2) gas wells, including coal bed methane wells; PROVIDED any appliances, equipment, machinery or devices used in such operation are operated within the manufacturer's specifications and with all standard noise-reducing equipment in use, unmodified and in proper operating condition.

The exemption as to any operation permitted by applicable state and/or local agency, but not operating as permitted as of the effective date of this ordinance, shall not apply to any noise emanating from a source which exceeds the limitation of Section 6 when measured

at the existing or permitted but not constructed receiving building, unless the owner of the receiving building, has consented in writing to exceeding that level.

O. Any well drilling or related activities when being used on a specific short term project not exceeding forty-five (45) days associated with coal mining, coal bed methane or gas well operations (such as, but not limited to, well plugging, bore hole and portal construction, and gas well drilling and development), or for underground mine emergencies, or as required by state or Federal laws or regulations, for the duration of that specific, short-term project; PROVIDED such well drilling or related equipment is operated within the manufacturer's specifications and with all standard noise-reducing equipment in use, unmodified and in proper operational condition. Said exemption shall not apply to any steady state sound emanating from a source which exceeds a maximum noise level of 70 dB(a) when measured at the property lines of the use creating same.

SECTION 8. SPECIAL WAIVER. A temporary waiver from strict compliance with the noise standards specified herein may be granted to persons during emergency circumstances, as determined by the Board of Supervisors, to permit reasonable time to effect repairs.

SECTION 9. POLICY. It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors in adopting this ordinance not to force any industrial or commercial enterprise out of business, but rather to work with any industrial or commercial enterprise to find ways to reduce noise levels to the level permitted by this ordinance.

SECTION 10. ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS. This ordinance may be enforced by the Code Enforcement Officer.

SECTION 11. ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES. The following procedures and penalties are prescribed for enforcement of this ordinance.

A. Warnings. If it is determined by a sound level meter reading that a noise level is in excess of the levels prescribed by this ordinance, the Township and/or Code Enforcement Officer, shall issue a written warning to the person responsible. Any such warning shall be in effect for six (6) months.

B. Offenses. If it is determined by a sound level meter reading that a noise level in excess of the levels permitted by this Ordinance shall have been caused or permitted by any person within six (6) months after the issuance of a warning, the Township and/or Code Enforcement Officer, may prosecute such person causing or permitting said noise level before the District Magistrate.

C. Injunctions. In addition, the Township, upon authorization by the Board of Supervisors, may file legal or equitable actions in Court to abate or enjoin violations of this ordinance.

D. Public Nuisance. Any emission of noise from any source in excess of the limitations established herein is hereby declared to be a public nuisance and may be abated by administrative or judicial proceedings, fines and penalties herein provided.

E. Other Remedies. Nothing in this Ordinance shall be construed to impair any

cause of action or legal remedy thereof, of any person or the public for injury or damage arising from the emission or release into the atmosphere or ground from any source whatever of noise on such place or manner, or at such levels which may give rise to such cause of action.

SECTION 12. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER RESTRICTIONS. The provisions of this Ordinance are not intended to interfere with, abrogate or annul other rules, regulations or ordinances, including Title 18 (Crimes Code) and Title 75 (Vehicle Code), Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes. If more stringent requirements concerning noise abatement are contained in other statutes, rules, regulations or Ordinances, the more stringent regulation shall apply.

SECTION 13. PENALTIES. Any person, firm or corporation who shall violate any provision of this ordinance shall, upon conviction thereof, as a summary offense, be sentenced to pay a fine of not more than One Thousand (\$1,000.00) Dollars; and in default of payment, to imprisonment for a term not to exceed thirty (30) days. Every day that a violation of this ordinance continues shall constitute a separate offense.

SECTION 14. SEVERABILITY. If any sentence, clause, section or part of this Ordinance is for any reason found to be unconstitutional, illegal or invalid, such unconstitutionality, illegality or invalidity shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions, sentences, clauses, sections or parts of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared as the intent of the Board of Supervisors that this Ordinance would have been adopted had the unconstitutional, illegal or invalid sentence, clause, section or part thereof not been included

therein.

SECTION 15. REPEALER. All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances which are inconsistent therewith are hereby repealed.

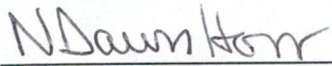
SECTION 16. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Ordinance shall take effect five (5) days from the date of adoption.

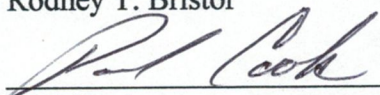
DULY ENACTED AND ORDAINED into an Ordinance and passed by the Board of Supervisors of Center Township, Greene County, Pennsylvania, in public session duly assembled, on this 8th day of May, 2008.

CENTER TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BY: 
William R. Main

ATTEST:


N. Dawn Horr, Secretary

Rodney T. Bristor

Paul Cook