

Reading: February 6, 2007

**STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF FULTON**

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 12, OFFENSES AND VIOLATIONS,
OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES TO ADOPT THE CITY OF SANDY
SPRINGS' NOISE ORDINANCE**

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Sandy Springs are charged with promoting and protecting the health, safety and welfare of the citizens and property owners of the City of Sandy Springs; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council find that excessive sound is a serious hazard to the public health, welfare, safety, and the quality of life, and that the people have a right to, and should be ensured an environment free from excessive sound; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council find that the City is more likely to attract permanent residents and commercial enterprises if it controls and maintains appropriate noise quality and the residents will ultimately gain financial improvements and protection in their quality of life as a result of these regulations; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Sandy Springs find that a substantial body of science and technology exists by which excessive sound may be substantially abated in a reasonable manner; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Sandy Springs have resolved that it is their policy to prevent excessive sound that may jeopardize the health, welfare, or safety of the citizens or degrade the quality of life; and

NOW, THEREFORE, to accomplish the foregoing, the Mayor and City Council of the City of Sandy Springs, Georgia, pursuant to their authority, do hereby adopt the following Ordinance:

1.

Chapter 12, Offenses and Violations, of the City of Sandy Springs Code of Ordinances is hereby amended by the insertion of Article 6, to read as follows:

Article 6: Noise Control.

Section 1: Title, Purpose and Intent

- (a) This Section shall be known as the Noise Ordinance of the City of Sandy Springs.
- (b) Excessive sound is a serious hazard to the public health, welfare, safety, and the quality of life; and, a substantial body of science and technology exists by which excessive sound may be substantially abated; and, the people have a right to, and should be ensured an environment free from excessive sound.

In order to ensure attractive residential and commercial areas, it is necessary that an audibly satisfying environment be maintained. It is the policy of the Mayor and Council of the City of Sandy Springs to prevent excessive sound that may jeopardize the health, welfare, or safety of the citizens or degrade the quality of life. The City of Sandy Springs is more likely to attract permanent residents and commercial enterprises if it controls and maintains appropriate noise quality and the residents will ultimately gain financial improvements and protection in their quality of life as a result of these regulations.

- (c) This ordinance shall apply to the control of sound originating from sources within the limits of the City of Sandy Springs.

Section 2: Powers, Duties and Qualifications.

- (a) The provisions of this ordinance shall be enforced by the Code Enforcement Officers and/or the Police Officers of the City.
- (b) The Director of the Department of Community Development, or his/her designee, and the Chief of Police, or his/her designee, shall have the power to:
 - (i) Coordinate the noise control activities of all municipal departments and cooperate with all other public bodies and agencies to the extent practicable;
 - (ii) Review the actions of other municipal departments and advise such departments to the effect, if any, of such actions on noise control;
 - (iii) Review public and private projects, subject to mandatory review or approval by other departments or boards, for compliance with this ordinance; and
 - (iv) Grant permits for variances according to the provisions of Section 6 of this Article.
- (c) A Code Enforcement Officer or Police Officer shall be qualified to enforce the provisions of this Article if he or she has satisfactorily completed any of the following:
 - (i) An instructional program in community noise from a certified noise control engineer, as evidenced by certification from the Institute of Noise Control Engineering (INCE);
 - (ii) An instructional program in community noise from another qualified Code Enforcement Officer or Police Officer; or

- (iii) Education or experience or a combination thereof certified by the Director of the Department of Community Development or the Chief of Police as equivalent to the provisions of (i) or (ii) of this section.
- (d) Noise measurements taken by a Code Enforcement Officer or Police Officer shall be taken in accordance with the procedures specified in Section 5: Sound Measurement and Reporting.

Section 3: Duties and Responsibilities of Other Departments.

- (a) All departments and agencies of the Municipality shall carry out their programs according to law and shall cooperate with the Director of the Department of Community Development and the Chief of Police in the implementation and enforcement of this ordinance.
- (b) All departments charged with new projects or changes to existing projects that may result in the production of noise shall consult with the Director of the Department of Community Development and the Chief of Police prior to the approval of such projects to ensure that such activities comply with the provisions of this ordinance.

Section 4: Prohibited noises; enumeration; penalty.

- (a) It shall be unlawful for any person to make, continue, or cause to be made or continued any loud, unnecessary, or unusual noise, or any noise which either annoys, disturbs, injures, or endangers the comfort, repose, health, peace, or safety of others in the city.
- (b) The following acts are declared to be loud, disturbing, and unnecessary noise in violation of this section, but this enumeration shall not be deemed to be exclusive:
 - (1) *Horns, signaling devices.* The sounding of any horn or signaling device on any automobile, motorcycle, or other vehicle on any street or public place in the city except as a danger warning; the creation of any unreasonable loud or harsh sound by means of any signaling device and the sounding of any device for an unnecessary and unreasonable period of time; the use of any signaling device except one operated by hand or electricity; the use of any horn, whistle or other device operated by engine exhaust; and the use of any signaling device when traffic is for any reason held up.
 - (2) *Radios, phonographs and similar devices.* The using, operating, or permitting to be played, used, or operated any radio receiving set, musical instrument, phonograph, or other machine or device for the producing or reproducing of sound in a manner as to disturb the peace, quiet, and comfort of the neighboring inhabitants or at any time with a volume louder than necessary for the convenient hearing of the person who is in the room, vehicle, or chamber, in which the machine or device is operated, and who is a voluntary listener thereto. The operation of any set, instrument, phonograph, machine, or device

between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. on weekdays and between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. on weekends and holidays when the audibility of the prohibited noise is measured from property line of adjacent properties or the public right-of-way of the property shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of this section.

(3) *Loudspeakers and amplifiers for advertising.* The using, operating, or permitting to be played, used, or operated, of any radio receiving set, musical instrument, phonograph, loudspeaker, sound amplifier, or other machine or device for the producing or reproducing of sound which is cast upon the public streets for the purpose of commercial advertising or attracting the attention of the public to any building or structure. Announcements over loudspeakers can only be made by the announcer in person and without the aid of any mechanical device.

(4) *Yelling, shouting, hooting, whistling, or singing.* Yelling, shouting, hooting, whistling, or singing on the public streets, particularly between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. or at any time or place so as to annoy or disturb the quiet, comfort or repose of persons in any office, dwelling, hotel, or other type of residence or of any persons in the vicinity.

(5) *Animals and birds.* The keeping of any animal or bird which by causing frequent or long continued noise shall disturb the comfort or repose of any persons in the vicinity.

(6) *Steam whistles.* The blowing of any steam whistle attached to any stationary boiler except to give notice of the time to begin or stop work or as a warning of fire or danger or upon request of proper city authorities.

(7) *Exhausts.* The discharge into the open air of the exhaust of any steam engine, stationary internal combustion engine or motor boat except through a muffler or other device which will effectively prevent loud or explosive noises therefrom.

(8) *Defect in vehicle or load.* The use of any automobile, motorcycle, or vehicle so out of repair, so loaded, or in a manner as to create loud and unnecessary grating, grinding, rattling, or other noise.

(9) *Loading, unloading and opening boxes.* The creation of a loud and excessive noise in connection with loading or unloading any vehicle or the opening and destruction of bales, boxes, crates, and containers.

(10) i. *Construction or repair.* Construction of any type, including, but not limited to, the erection (including excavation), demolition, alteration, or repair of any building, as well as the operation of any pile driver, steam shovel, pneumatic hammer, derrick, steam or electric hoist, automatic nailers or staplers, or any similar equipment attended by loud or unusual noise, shall be prohibited during the following times:

Before 7:30 a.m. or after 7:30 p.m. on weekdays, and before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays, and at any time on Sundays and/or legal holidays.

ii Landscape Contractor using any type of motorized mowers or mechanical blowers and other equipment which create loud and excessive noise shall be prohibited, during the following times:

Before 7:30 a.m. or after 7:30 p.m. on weekdays, and before 8:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays, and at any time on Sundays and/or legal holidays.

(11) *Schools, courts, places of worship and hospitals.* The creation of any excessive noise on any street adjacent to any school, institution of learning, place of worship, or court, while in use, or adjacent to any hospital which unreasonably interferes with the normal operation of that institution, or which disturbs or unduly annoys patients in the hospital, provided that conspicuous signs are displayed in those streets indicating a school, hospital, or court street.

(12) *Hawkers, peddlers and vendors.* The shouting and crying of peddlers, hawkers, and vendors which disturb the peace and quiet of the neighborhood.

(13) *Noise to attract attention.* The use of any drum or other instrument or device for the purpose of attracting attention by creation of noise to any performance, show, or sale.

(14) *Transportation of metal rails; similar materials.* The transportation of rails, pillars, or columns of iron, steel, or other material over and along streets and other public places so as to cause loud noises or as to disturb the peace and quiet of those streets or other public places.

(15) *Blowers.* The operation of any noise-creating blower or power fan or any internal combustion engine, the operation of which causes noise due to the explosion of operating gases or fluids, unless the noise from the blower or fan is muffled and the engine is equipped with a muffler device sufficient to deaden the noise.

(16) *Sound trucks.* The use of mechanical loudspeakers or amplifiers on trucks or other moving or standing vehicles for advertising or other commercial purposes. The use of sound trucks for noncommercial purposes during hours and in places and with volume as would constitute this use as a public nuisance, provided that the provisions of this section shall not apply to or be enforced against:

i. Any vehicle of the city while engaged in necessary public business;

- ii. Excavations or repairs of streets by or on behalf of the city, county, or state at night when the public welfare and convenience renders it impossible to perform such work during the day; or
- iii. The reasonable use of amplifiers or loudspeakers in the course of public addresses which are noncommercial in character.

Section 5: Sound Measurement and Reporting:

- (a) The standards to be considered and reported in determining whether a violation of this article has occurred may include, but not be limited by, the following:
 - (i) Origin of the noise (natural or manmade);
 - (ii) Proximity of noise to residential areas;
 - (iii) Zoning and use of the area from which the noise emanates;
 - (iv) Zoning and use of the area(s) where noise is audible;
 - (v) Time of day or night the noise occurs;
 - (vi) Duration of the noise.

Section 6: Variances.

- (a) Variances to the provisions contained in this article may be requested, in writing, at least 48-hours prior to the proposed operation or event, for consideration by the Director of the Department of Community Development and the Chief of Police. Such a request shall state the following:
 - (i) The reasons that variances from the provisions of this article are needed.
 - (ii) The impact that the denial of this request will have on the applicant's project or event and the surrounding properties.
 - (iii) The steps which have been taken by the applicant to communicate those needs and impacts to owners of surrounding and nearby properties.
 - (iv) The steps that have or will be taken to limit the impact of the proposed activity upon surrounding and nearby properties.
- (b) No variance shall be approved unless the applicant presents adequate proof that:
 - (i) Noise levels occurring during the period of the variance will not constitute a danger to public health; and
 - (ii) Compliance with the ordinance would impose an unreasonable hardship on the applicant with equal or greater benefits to the public.
- (c) In making the determination of granting a variance, the Director of the Department of Community Development and the Chief of Police shall consider the following:
 - (i) The character and degree of injury to, or interference with, the health and welfare or the reasonable use of the property that is caused or threatened to be caused;

- (ii) The social and economic value of the activity for which the variance is sought; and
 - (iii) The ability of the applicant to apply the best practical noise control measures.
- (d) If the Director of the Department of Community Development and the Chief of Police find that the variance application adequately demonstrates the need for a variation from the provisions of this article and adequately provides for the amelioration of the impact upon surrounding and nearby properties, permission shall be granted for one variation within one 24 hour period. If no complaints are received by the Director or the Chief of Police regarding noise associated with the applicant's activities, the Director and the Chief may grant for that project or event one additional variation in any 24-hour period.
- (e) The permit of variance may be revoked by the Director of the Department of Community Development and the Chief of Police if the terms of the permit of variance are violated.
- (i) A variance may be revoked if there is:
 - 1. Violation of one or more conditions of the variance;
 - 2. Material misrepresentation of fact in the variance application; or
 - 3. Material change in any of the circumstances relied on in granting the variance.

Section 7: Enforcement Procedures and Penalty.

- (a) Upon occurrence of a violation of this Section, Code Enforcement Officers or Police Officers having jurisdiction in the area where the violation takes place may issue a citation or summons for the violation returnable to the Municipal Court of Sandy Springs.
- (b) In lieu of issuing a citation or summons the Director of the Department of Community Development and Chief of Police may issue an order requiring abatement of any sound source alleged to be in violation of this ordinance within a reasonable time period and according to guidelines that the Director or Chief may prescribe.
- (c) Any person who violates any provision of this ordinance shall be subject to a fine for each offense of not more than \$1000.00 and/or jail time.
 - (i) If the violation is of a continuing nature, each day during which it occurs shall constitute an additional, separate, and distinct offense.
- (d) No provision of this ordinance shall be construed to impair any common law or statutory cause of action, or legal remedy therefrom, of any person for injury or damage arising from any violation of this ordinance or from other law.

Section 8: Severability

- (a) If any provision of this ordinance is held to be unconstitutional, preempted by federal law, or otherwise invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions of the ordinance shall not be invalidated.

Section 9: Exemptions.

- (a) The provisions of this ordinance shall not apply to:
- (i) Noise from power tools, lawn mowers, and other lawn equipment when operated by the resident(s) and no more than two (2) non-residents, who shall not be conducting the work under commercial employment.
 - (ii) The generation of sound for the purpose of alerting persons to the existence of an emergency;
 - (iii) The generation of sound in the performance of emergency work; or
 - (iv) The generation of sound in situations within the jurisdiction of the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
 - (v) Sound from church bells and chimes when a part of a religious observance or service;
 - (vi) Noise from snow blowers, snow throwers, and snow plows when operated with a muffler for the purpose of snow removal.
 - (vii) Noise generated from municipally sponsored or approved celebrations or events shall be exempt from the provisions of this ordinance.

2.

All ordinances, parts of ordinances, or regulations in conflict herewith are repealed.

3.

Severability. Should any court of competent jurisdiction declare any section of this Ordinance invalid or unconstitutional, such declaration shall not affect the validity of the Ordinance as a whole or any part thereof, which is not specifically declared to be invalid or unconstitutional.

4.

Repeal of Conflicting Provisions. It is the intention of the Mayor and Council, and it is hereby ordained that the provisions of this Ordinance shall become and be made a part of the Code of Ordinances, City of Sandy Springs, Georgia and the sections of this Ordinance may be renumbered to accomplish such intention.

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5.

This Ordinance is effective February 6, 2007; and

ORDAINED this the 6th day of February, 2007.

Approved:

Eva Galambos
Eva Galambos, Mayor

Attest:

Christina Rowland
Christina Rowland, City Clerk

(Seal)

