# Chicago, Illinois

as of 2001

# ARTICLE VII. NOISE AND VIBRATION CONTROL

# 11-4-1100 Definitions.

Definitions relating to Article VII will be found in Section 11-4-120.

(Prior code § 17-4.1; Added Coun. J. 1-27-88, p. 10081)

# 11-4-1110 Sound pressure level--Public way.

No person except a person participating in a parade or public assembly for which a permit has been obtained pursuant to Chapter 10-8, shall, for purposes of entertainment or communication, generate any sound by any means so that (1) the sound pressure level on the public way measured at a distance of ten feet or further from the source exceeds 80 dB(A), or is more than 10 Db(A) above the ambient *noise* level, or (2) the sound is louder than an average conversational level at a distance of 200 feet or more, measured either horizontally or vertically from the point of generation. Any person participating in a parade or public assembly for which a permit has been obtained pursuant to Chapter 10-8 of this Code may generate sound in excess of the limitations in this section only if the sound generated does not exceed maximum levels set forth in regulations that the commissioner of the environment may promulgate. Such regulations shall define reasonable maximum sound levels in light of the nature of the event, its time, and the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

(Prior code § 17-4.2; Added Coun. J. 1-27-88, p. 10081; Amend Coun. J. 6-23-93, p. 34389; Amend Coun. J. 7-21-99, p. 9474)

## 11-4-1115 Sound device restrictions--Violation--Penalty.

(a) No person shall play, use, operate or permit to be played, used or operated, any radio, tape recorder, cassette player or other device for receiving broadcast sound or reproducing recorded sound if the device is located:

(1) On the public way; or

(2) In any motor vehicle on the public way;

and if the sound generated by the device is clearly audible to a person with normal hearing at a distance greater than 75 feet. This section shall not apply to any person participating in a parade or public assembly for which a permit has been obtained pursuant to Chapter 10-8.

(b) Any person who violates this section shall be subject to a fine of \$50.00 for a first offense, \$100.00 for a second offense committed within a one-year period, and \$500.00 for a third or subsequent offense committed within a one-year period.

(c) (1) A motor vehicle that is used in the violation of subsection (a) of this section shall be subject to seizure and impoundment under this subsection. The owner of record of such vehicle shall be liable to the city for an administrative penalty of \$500.00 in addition to fees for the towing and storage of the vehicle.

(2) Whenever a police officer has probable cause to believe that a vehicle is subject to seizure and impoundment pursuant to this section, the police officer shall provide for the towing of the

vehicle to a facility controlled by the city or its agents. When the vehicle is towed, the police officer shall notify the person who is found to be in control of the vehicle at the time of the alleged violation, if there is such a person, of the fact of the seizure and of the vehicle owner's right to request a preliminary hearing to be conducted under Section 2-14-132 of this Code.

(3) The provisions of Section 2-14-132 shall apply whenever a motor vehicle is seized and impounded pursuant to this section.

(Added Coun. J. 6-23-93, p. 34389; Amend Coun. J. 7-31-96, p. 26912; Amend Coun. J. 4-29-98, p. 66565)

## 11-4-1120 Sound pressure level--Time restrictions.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this article, no person on the public way, in a public or private open space, or in a vehicle shall generate any sound by any means so that the sound pressure level exceeds 55 dB(A) within any residential unit between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m.

(Prior code § 17-4.3; Added Coun. J. 1-27-88, p. 10081)

### 11-4-1130 Exempted acts.

The provisions of Sections 11-4-1110 or 11-4-1120 shall not apply to any of the following acts:

(a) Use of a sound amplification device as an alarm or emergency warning device;

(b) Sounds generated between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. in construction, demolition or repair work pursuant to duly authorized permit or franchise or license agreement;

(c) Sounds generated in construction, demolition or repair work of an emergency nature or in work on public improvements authorized by a governmental body or agency;

\_\_\_\_\_(d) Sounds generated by any aircraft or generated in connection with the operation of any airport;

(e) Sounds generated at any stadium or in connection with any festival, parade or street fair conducted pursuant to a valid permit;

(f) Sounds generated in the operation of any mass transit system.

(Prior code § 17-4.4; Added Coun. J. 1-27-88, p. 10081)

### 11-4-1140 Lowest level limits to apply.

In case of conflict between any sections of this article, the provision which contains the lowest level limits shall apply.

(Prior code § 17-4.5; Added Coun. J. 1-27-88, p. 10081)

## 11-4-1150 Prohibited acts.

The following acts and the causing thereof are prohibited:

(a) Sounding or permitting the sounding of any electronically amplified signal from any stationary bell, chime, siren, whistle or similar device intended primarily for nonemergency purposes from any place in such a manner as to create a *noise* disturbance at a residential lot boundary or residential zoning district

boundary for more than five minutes in an hourly period;

(b) Intentionally sounding or permitting the sounding outdoors of any fire, burglar or civil defense alarm, siren, whistle or similar stationary emergency signaling device except in the following instances:

(1) For emergency purposes;

(2) For less than four minutes in an hourly period; or

(3) For testing of any stationary emergency signaling device which shall occur at the same time of day each time such a test is performed, shall use only the minimum cycle test time and in no case shall exceed four minutes nor shall it occur before 9:00 a.m. or after 5:00 p.m.;

(c) Creating or causing the creation of any sound within any *noise* sensitive zone, designated pursuant \_to 2-30-030(18) so as to interfere with the functions of any school, library, hospital, nursing home or other medical facility within the zone. Signs indicating a *noise* sensitive zone shall be conspicuously posted at the zone's boundaries;

(d) Loading, unloading, opening, closing or other handling of boxes, crates, containers, building materials, garbage cans or similar objects between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. the following day in such a manner as to cause a *noise* disturbance at a residence lot boundary or a residential zoning district boundary or within a *noise* sensitive zone;

(e) Blowing or causing to be blown any steam whistle as a signal for commencing or suspending work or for any other purpose; provided that this section shall not be construed to prohibit the use of steam whistles as alarm signals in case of fire, collision or other imminent danger;

(f) Using any pile driver, shovel, hammer, derrick, hoist tractor, roller or other mechanical apparatus operated by fuel or electric power in building, construction, repair or demolition operations between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. the following day within 600 feet of any residential building or hospital; provided that this provision shall not apply to any construction, demolition or repair work of an emergency nature or to work on public improvements authorized by a governmental body or agency.

(Prior code § 17-4.6; Added Coun. J. 1-27-88, p. 10081; Amend 12-11-91, p. 10978)

## 11-4-1160 Motor vehicles.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any person to operate any motor of a motor vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 10,000 pounds for a consecutive period longer than two minutes while such vehicle is standing on private property and located within 45 meters of any property zoned and used for residential purposes, except where such vehicle is standing within a completely enclosed structure.

This section shall not apply to buses operated for the transportation of passengers while standing in established bus turnarounds, bus terminals, bus parking lots and bus-storage yards.

(b) No person shall sell or offer for sale a new motor vehicle that produces a maximum *noise* exceeding the following *noise* limit at a distance of 15 meters from the centerline of travel under test procedures established by Section 11-4-1330 of this chapter:

TABLE	INSET:
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	Type of Vehicle	Date of Manufacture	Noise Limit dB(A)
(1)	Motorcycle	After 1 Jan. 1975	84
	Same	After 1 Jan. 1982	80
	Same	After 1 Jan. 1985	78
(2)	Any motor vehicle with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds except buses)	After 1 Jan. 1975	84
	Same	After 1 Jan. 1978	83

	Same	After 1 Jan. 1982	80
	Same	After 1 Jan. 1985	77
(3)	Passenger cars, Motor-driven cycle and any other motor vehicle	After 1 Jan. 1975	80
	Same	After 1 Jan. 1983	78
	Same	After 1 Jan. 1986	75
(4)	Buses with a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds	After 1 Jan. 1975	84
	Same	After 1 Jan. 1983	80
	Same	After 1 Jan. 1985	77

The manufacturer, distributor, importer or designated agent shall certify in writing to the commissioner that his vehicles sold within the city comply with the provisions of this section.

(c) No person shall operate within the speed limits specified in this section either a motor vehicle or combination of vehicles of a type subject to registration at any time or under any condition or grade, load, acceleration or deceleration in such manner as to exceed the following *noise* limit for the category of motor vehicle, based on a distance not less than 15 meters from the centerline of travel under test procedures established by Section 11-4-350 of this chapter.

This section applies to the total **noise** from a vehicle or combination of vehicles and shall not be construed as limiting or precluding the enforcement of any other provisions of this Code relating to motor vehicle mufflers for **noise** control.

#### TABLE INSET:

<i>Noise</i> Limit in Relation to Posted Speed Limit			
	Type of Vehicle	55 KMPH or Less	Over 55 KMPH
(1)	Any motor vehicle with a GVWR greater than 454 kilograms and any combination of vehicles towed by such motor vehicle after 1 Jan. 1973	86 dB(A)	90 dB(A)
(2)	Any motorcycle other than a motor-driven cycle after 1 Jan. 1978	78 dB(A)	82 dB(A)
(3)	Any other motor vehicle and any combination of motor vehicles towed by such motor vehicle after 1 Jan. 1978	70 dB(A)	79 dB(A)

(d) No person shall modify or change the exhaust muffler, intake muffler or any other **noise** abatement device of a motor vehicle in a manner such that the **noise** emitted by the motor vehicle is increased above that emitted by the vehicle as originally manufactured. Procedures used to establish compliance with this paragraph shall be those used to establish compliance of a new motor vehicle with the requirements of this article.

(Prior code § 17-4.7; Amend 10-5-94, p. 57694)

## 11-4-1170 Power tools and equipment.

No person shall sell or lease or offer for sale or lease any powered equipment or powered hand tool that produces a maximum *noise* level exceeding the following *noise* limits at a distance of 15 meters, under test procedures established by Section 11-4-1350 of this chapter.

Type of Equipment Limit

(1) Construction and industrial machinery, such as crawler-tractors, dozers, rotary drills, augers, loaders, power shovels, cranes, derricks, motor graders, paving machines, off-highway trucks, ditchers, trenchers, compactors, scrapers, wagons, pavement breakers, compressors and pneumatic equipment, etc. but not including pile drivers:

Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1972 94 dB(A)
Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1973 88 dB(A)
Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1975 86 dB(A)
Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1982 83 dB(A)
(2) Agricultural tractors and equipment:
Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1972 88 dB(A)
Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1975 86 dB(A)
Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1982 83 dB(A)
(3) Powered commercial equipment of 20 HP or less intended for infrequent use in a residential area such as chain saws, pavement breakers, log chippers, powered hand tools, etc.:
Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1972 88 dB(A)
Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1973 84 dB(A)

Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1980 . . . 80 dB(A)

(4) Powered equipment intended for repetitive use in residential areas, such as lawn mowers, small lawn and garden tools, riding tractors, snow removal equipment, etc.:

Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1972 . . . 74 dB(A) Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1975 . . . 70 dB(A) Manufactured after 1 Jan. 1978 . . . 65 dB(A)

(Prior code § 17-4.8)

## 11-4-1180 Compliance with standards for specific zoning district.

Any property use established in a zoning district as defined and designated under the provisions of the Chicago Zoning Ordinance shall be so operated as to comply with the performance standards governing *noise* set forth hereinafter for the district in which such use shall be located.

(Prior code § 17-4.9)

### 11-4-1190 Measurement of noise levels.

*Noise* levels shall be measured in terms of sound pressure level in octave frequency bands used equipment which meets the requirements established by the ordinance. Maximum permissible octave band sound levels as provided hereinafter shall be reduced by five dB for any octave band containing a pure tone as defined in Section 11-4-120. Impulsive-type **noise** shall be subject to the performance standards hereinafter prescribed, provided that equipment suitable for such **noise** measurements, as defined by this ordinance, is used. Noises such as those of an irregular and intermittent nature shall be restricted as provided for hereinafter.

(Prior code § 17-4.10)

# 11-4-1200 Manufacturing districts restricted.

In all instances in which an M2 general manufacturing or M3 heavy manufacturing district does not adjoin a residence or business district, the performance standards governing **noise** of the M1 restricted manufacturing districts shall apply at the nearest residence or business district boundary line, as these districts are defined and designated under the provisions of the Chicago Zoning Ordinance (Municipal Code of Chicago, Title 17).

(Prior code § 17-4.11)

# 11-4-1210 Decibel levels--M1-1 to M1-5 districts.

In M1-1 to M1-5 restricted manufacturing zoning districts, inclusive, at no point on the boundary of a residence, business or commercial zoning district shall the sound pressure level of any individual operation or plant or the combined operations of any person, firm or corporation exceed the decibel levels in the designated octave bands shown below for the zoning districts indicated as measured under test procedures established by Section 11-4-1360 of this chapter.

Octave Band Center	Maximum Sound Pressure Levels (dB) Along District Boundaries	
Frequency (Hz)	Residence	Business- Commercial
31.5	72	79
63	71	78
125	65	72
250	57	64
500	51	58
1000	45	52
2000	39	46
4000	34	41
8000	32	39
A-scale levels	55 dB(A)	62 dB(A)
(for monitoring purposes)		

#### TABLE INSET:

In business and commercial zoning districts all activities involving the production, processing, cleaning, servicing, testing, repair of materials, goods, or products or any property use shall conform with the performance standards stated above; provided that performance standards shall in every case be applied at the boundaries of the lot on which any such activities take place.

In residential zoning districts, any property use shall conform with the performance standards stated above for residence district boundaries; provided that preference standards shall in every case be applied at the boundaries of the lot on which such use is established.

The maximum sound pressure level established in this section to be applied to the boundaries of a lot shall not apply to construction sites. Construction site *noise* shall be regulated by Section 11-4-1150 of this chapter.

(Prior code § 17-4.12)

# 11-4-1220 Decibel levels--M2-1 to M2-5 districts.

In M2-1 to M2-5 general manufacturing zoning districts, inclusive, at no point either on the boundary of a residence, business or commercial district, or at 40 meters from the nearest property line of a plant or operation, whichever distance is greater, shall the sound pressure level of any individual operation or plant or the combined operations of any person, firm or corporation exceed the decibel levels in the designated octave bands shown below for the zoning districts included as measured under test procedures established by Section 11-4-1360 of this chapter.

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TABLE	

Octave Band Center	Maximum Sound Pressure Levels (dB) Along District Boundaries	
Frequency (Hz)	Residence	Business- Commercial
31.5	72	79
63	71	78
125	66	73
250	60	67
500	54	61
1000	49	55
2000	44	50
4000	40	46
8000	37	43
A-scale levels	58 dB(A)	64 dB(A)
(for monitoring purposes)		

(Prior code § 17-4.13)

## 11-4-1230 Decibel levels--M3-1 to M3-5 districts.

In M3-1 to M3-5 heavy manufacturing zoning district, inclusive, at no point either on the boundary of a residence, business or commercial district or at 40 meters from the nearest property line of a plant or operation, whichever distance is greater, shall the sound pressure level of any individual operation or plant, or the combined operations of any person, firm or corporation exceed the decibel levels in the designated octave bands shown below for the zoning districts included as measured under test procedures established by Section 11-4-1360 of this chapter.

#### TABLE INSET:

Octave Band Center	Maximum Sound Pressure Levels (dB) Along District Boundaries	
Frequency (Hz)	Residence	Business- Commercial
31.5	75	80
63	74	79
125	69	74
250	64	69
500	58	63
1000	52	57
2000	47	52
4000	43	48
8000	40	45
A-scale levels (for monitoring purposes)	61 dB(A)	66 dB(A)

(Prior code § 17-4.14)

### 11-4-1240 Vibration standards.

Any property use established in a manufacturing, commercial or business zoning district shall be so operated as to comply with the performance standards governing vibration set forth herein for the zoning district in which such use shall be located.

(Prior code § 17-4.15)

## 11-4-1250 Earthshaking vibrations--M1-1 to M1-5 districts.

In M1-1 to M1-5 restricted manufacturing zoning districts, inclusive, any use or portion thereof creating earthshaking vibrations such as are created by drop forges or hydraulic surges shall be controlled in such manner as to prevent transmission beyond the lot line of earthshaking vibrations perceptible without the aid of instruments, except for lot lines adjoining M3 heavy manufacturing zoning district, but in no case shall any such vibration be allowed to create a nuisance or hazard beyond the lot lines.

(Prior code § 17-4.16)

# 11-4-1260 Earthshaking vibrations--M2-1 to M2-5 districts.

In M2-1 to M2-5 general manufacturing zoning districts, inclusive, any use or portion thereof creating intense earthshaking vibrations such as are created by drop forges or heavy hydraulic surges, shall be set back at least 90 meters from the boundary of a residence, business or commercial zoning district and at least 45 meters from the boundary of an M1 restricted manufacturing zoning district, unless such operation is controlled in such a manner as to prevent transmission beyond the lot lines of earthshaking vibrations perceptible without the aid of instruments.

(Prior code § 17-4.17)

## 11-4-1270 Vibration--M3-1 to M3-5 districts.

In M3-1 to M3-5 heavy manufacturing zoning districts, inclusive, the performance standards governing vibration in the M2 zoning districts shall apply.

(Prior code § 17-4.18)

### 11-4-1280 Vibrations--Business and commercial districts.

In business and commercial zoning districts, the performance standards governing vibrations in the M1 zoning districts shall apply.

(Prior code § 17-4.19)

### 11-4-1290 Motor vehicle horns and audible signal devices.

No person shall sound any horn or audible signal device of any motor vehicle of any kind while not in motion nor shall such horn or signal device be sounded under any circumstances except as required by law nor shall it be sounded for any unnecessary or unreasonable period of time.

(Prior code § 17-4.20)

### 11-4-1300 Boat operation restrictions.

No person shall operate any engine-powered pleasure vessel, engine-powered craft or motorboat within the harbor of Chicago, on any waterway within the City of Chicago or anywhere within Lake Michigan within two miles of the city corporate limits at any time in such a manner as to exceed the following **noise** limit, as measured at a distance of not less than 15 meters from the path of travel:

Noise Limit

After 1 January, 1975 76 dB(A)

(Prior code § 17-4.21)

## 11-4-1310 Recreational and off-highway vehicles.

(a) No person shall sell or offer for sale a new motor-driven recreational or off-highway vehicle, including dune buggies, snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, go-carts and minibikes that produces a maximum *noise* exceeding the following *noise* limit at a distance of 15 meters from the centerline of travel under test procedures established by Section 11-4-1370 of this chapter.

TABLE INSET:

Type of Vehicle	Date of Manufacture	Noise Limit	
Snowmobile	After 1, January, 1971	86 dB(A)	
Same	After 1 June, 1972	82 dB(A)	
Same	After 1, June, 1974	73 dB(A)	
Any other vehicle	After 1 January, 1971	86 dB(A)	
including dune			
buggy, all-terrain	After 1 January, 1973	82 dB(A)	
vehicle, go-cart			
minibike	After 1 January, 1975	73 dB(A)	

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to operate a motor-driven vehicle of a type not subject to registration for road use, at any time or under any condition of load, acceleration or deceleration in such a manner as to exceed the following *noise* limit at any point on property zoned for business or residential use at a distance of not less than 15 meters from the path of travel:

Limit

Noise

After 1 January, 1973 . . . 82 dB(A)

(Prior code § 17-4.22)

### 11-4-1320 Nonapplicability of provisions to public performances.

The operational performance standards established by this ordinance shall not apply to any public performance being conducted in accordance with the provisions of a special permit granted by the city for the conduct of a public performance; provided that this exception does not exempt performers with permits issued under Section 4-268-030 of this Code from the *noise* limitations of this chapter.

(Prior code § 17-4.23; Amend Coun. J. 7-21-99, p. 9474)

# 11-4-1330 Test procedures--New motor vehicles.

Test procedures to determine whether maximum *noise* emitted by new motor vehicles sold or offered for sale meet the *noise* limits stated in Section 11-4-1160(b) of this chapter shall be in substantial conformity with current revisions of standard recommended practices established by the Society of Automotive Engineers, Inc., and including SAE Standard J331; SAE Recommended Practice J336; SAE Standard J986; and such other and further standards as may be propounded in the code of recommended practices of the department of the environment.

(Prior code § 17-4.24; Amend Coun. J. 12-11-91, p. 10978)

### 11-4-1340 Test procedures--In-use motor vehicles.

Test procedures to determine whether maximum *noise* emitted by motor vehicles in use meet the *noise* limits stated in Section 11-4-1160(c) of this chapter shall be in substantial conformity with current revisions of standards and recommended practices established by the Society of Automotive Engineers, Inc., including SAE Standard J986; SAE Standard J331; Recommended Practice J366; Recommended J184; and such other and further standards as may be propounded in the code of recommended practice of the department of consumer services.

(Prior code § 17-4.25)

### 11-4-1350 Test procedures--Powered tools and equipment.

Test procedures to determine whether maximum *noise* emitted by engine-powered equipment or powered hand tools, sold or leased, or offered for sale or lease, meet the *noise* limits stated in Section 11-4-1170 of this chapter shall be in substantial conformity with current revisions of standards and recommended practices established by the Society of Automotive Engineers, Inc., including SAE Standard J952; SAE Standard J88; SAE Recommended Practice J184; and such other and further standards as may be propounded in the code of recommended practice of the department of the environment.

(Prior code § 17-4.26; Amend Coun. J. 12-11-91, p. 10978)

### 11-4-1360 Test procedures--Precision instrumentation.

Test procedures to determine whether maximum *noise* levels emitted by property uses along property lines and zoning district boundaries meet the *noise* limits stated in Sections 11-4-1210, 11-4-1220 and 11-4-1230 of this chapter shall be in substantial conformity with revisions of ANSI Standard S1.4-1971; IEC Standard 123-1961; ANSI Standard S1.12-1967; ANSI Standard S1.11-1166; ANSI Standard S1.12-1971; IEC Standard 179-1965; IEC Standard 225-1966; SAE Recommended Practice J184; and such other and further standards as may be propounded in the code of recommended practices of the department of the environment.

(Prior code § 17-4.27; Amend Coun. J. 12-11-91, p. 10978)

## 11-4-1370 Test procedures--Recreational and off-highway vehicles.

Test procedures to determine whether maximum *noise* emitted by new motor-driven recreational or off-highway vehicles including dune buggies, snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, go-carts and minibikes meet the *noise* limits stated in Section 11-4-1310 of this chapter shall be in substantial conformity with current revisions of standards and recommended practices established by the Society of Automotive Engineers, Inc., including, SAE Standard J331; SAE Standard J986; SAE Recommended Practices of the department of the environment.

(Prior code § 17-4.28; Amend Coun. J. 12-11-91, p. 10978)

## 11-4-1380 Public nuisance declared--Abatement.

Any emission of *noise* or earthshaking vibration from any source in excess of the limitations established in or

pursuant to this article shall be deemed and is hereby declared to be a public nuisance and may be subject to summary abatement procedures. Such abatement may be in addition to the administrative proceedings, fines and penalties herein provided. The commissioner is empowered to secure the institution of legal proceedings through the corporation counsel for the abatement or prosecution of emissions of *noise* and earthshaking vibration which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to the public or endanger the health, comfort, safety or welfare of the public, or cause to have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to public or property. Such legal proceedings may be in addition to the administrative proceedings, fine and penalties herein provided.

(Prior code § 17-4.29)

# 11-4-1390 Legal remedy for damage unimpaired.

Nothing in this article shall be construed to impair any cause of action or legal remedy therefor 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** or earthshaking vibration in such place or manner or at such levels, so as to constitute a common law nuisance.

(Prior code § 17-4.30)