

# AIR CONDITIONING EQUIPMENT

**Are there any regulations regarding the placement of exterior air conditioning equipment?**

Yes. In addition to appropriate visual screening, air conditioning equipment must be located to comply with the City noise regulations. A minimum setback of 25-feet from any property line will generally comply. Air conditioners in the side yard generally do not comply with City noise regulations. When there are multiple units a greater setback may be required. A setback of less than 25-feet may be approved by the Planning Division upon receipt of a report from an acoustical engineer or by providing detailed information on the noise generated by the A/C unit and proposed placement on the lot (Please see diagram below). In determining the extent of a lesser set back, the Planning Division will take into account not only the acoustical engineer's report but also regular setback requirements.

Regardless of where exterior mechanical equipment is located, the provisions of the Los Altos Noise Ordinance shall apply, and it is the responsibility of the property owner to mitigate any violations. If baffling and/or repairs do not achieve compliance, it may be necessary to either relocate or remove the equipment.

**“If the AC unit is later determined by the City to exceed the limits of the noise ordinance, it must be relocated, replaced, or otherwise modified to achieve compliance with the ordinance.”**

### PLANNING DIVISION CALCULATIONS FOR LOCATING AIR CONDITIONERS TO MEET THE CITY OF LOS ALTOS NOISE ORDINANCE LIMIT OF 50 dBA

<u>Sound Rating (Bels)</u>	<u>Distance to Property Line</u>
6.4	6 feet (1.9 m)
6.6	8 feet (2.5 m)
6.8	11 feet (3.4 m)
7.0	14 feet (4.3 m)
7.2	18 feet (5.5 m)
7.4	22 feet (6.8 m)

Note: A permit for an air conditioner will be approved when the unit is located at least 25 feet from the closest neighboring single-family residential property line. However, the permit will be issued subject to the following stipulation: “If a noise complaint is received and the air conditioner is ultimately found to not comply with the City noise ordinance limits, then corrective measures must be taken to bring the air conditioner into compliance with the City noise ordinance.”

#### City Assumptions Used in Calculations:

1. The distance is measured from the outside edge of the air conditioner.
2. The air conditioner is located within 10 feet of **only one** reflective surface, such as the wall of a house.
3. There is a six-foot tall solid fence or wall along the nearest property line.
4. The listener is standing one-foot away from the solid fence or wall on the opposite side.

*Source:* ARI Standard 275 - 1997  
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