

# Crackdown is music to city ears

New rules and fines aim to dial down the neighborhood din

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Hamilton Heights better pipe down - or pay up.

As the city's loudest neighborhood - with 5,254 complaints to 311 this year - it's primed for a new noise code that goes into effect today.

"My blood pressure rises when the noise gets too high," said Rosa Weir, 52, a retired nurse who lives in Hamilton Heights.

"If Bloomberg wants to be President, he'll make sure the noise will cease with the new regulations."

Overhauled for the first time in three decades, the code promises to crack down on a wide range of noisemakers: jackhammers, bars and clubs, lawnmowers, and even ice cream trucks and their infernal jingle.

And that annoying guy blasting music through his iPod at a volume you can hear 5 feet away? He can now get slapped with a fine ranging from \$50 to

## MOST NEIGHBORHOOD COMPLAINTS:

1. Hamilton Heights	Manhattan	5,254
2. East Village	Manhattan	4,957
3. Flatbush	Brooklyn	4,854
4. Norwood	Bronx	4,554
5. Washington Heights	Manhattan	4,482
6. Williamsburg	Brooklyn	4,475
7. Upper West Side	Manhattan	4,405
8. Union Square	Manhattan	4,215
9. Belmont/Fordham	Bronx	3,949
10. Morris Heights	Bronx	3,650

SOURCE: OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NEW NOISE REGULATIONS

**ICE CREAM TRUCKS** Mister Softee and other ice cream trucks can only play jingles while driving.

**BARKING DOGS** Owners of noisy dogs can be fined \$50 to \$175 if their pets bark continuously for more than five minutes between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. or for 10 minutes between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m.

**BARS and RESTAURANTS** Noise from bars and restaurants cannot exceed 7 decibels measured 15 feet or more from the street.

**LAWN MOWERS** Lawn mowers cannot be used before 8 a.m. or after 7 p.m. or sunset on weekdays. Also banned on weekends and holidays before 9 a.m. and after 6 p.m.

SOURCE: CITY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

\$175.

"New York City is crying out for some relief," said Eric Zwerling, director of Rutgers University Noise Technical Assistance Center and a consultant on the code.

Emily Lloyd, commissioner of the Department of Environmental Protection, promised peace and quiet. "Over time, it will really make a difference in the quality of life," she said.

Noise is the No. 1 gripe made to the city's 311 hotline, with 278,000 such calls since July 2006. About half were complaints about disruptive neighbors.

Neighborhoods that produced the most noise complaints were the East Village, Flatbush, Brooklyn and Norwood, the Bronx.

"I actually bought an air conditioner just for the reason to drown out the noise," said Mimi Crume, 30, who lives in an apartment next to a nightclub on Avenue B. "In my bathroom, my walls vibrate from the nightclub."

She says she called 311 about 20 times over six months when she first moved in two years ago.



Roberts for News

**Foster McGinty, 22, says the area's noise drowns out his cell phone.**

Norwood residents also said the neighborhood noise is intolerable. "The neighbors are inconsiderate. You need to call the cops to get them to stop playing music, and when they leave, it gets back on," said Geraldine Perez, 18, a student at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Her newborn is woken nightly by people yelling on the street or cars honking on Moshulu Parkway, she said. "No one is there to stop them," she fumed.

Under the new regulations, inspectors can go after the owners of noisy bars and restaurants at night if the sound exceeds 7 decibels when measured 15 feet away on the

street. The code also lowers the allowable decibel level inside nearby homes from 45 to 42.

Cops don't need decibel-measuring devices to shut down music blasting from cars rolling down the street. Drivers can be fined if that music is "plainly audible" from 25 feet.

Not everyone thinks the crackdown is necessary.

In Flatbush, mother of three Ibei Zobi welcomes the din.

"That's the character of the neighborhood," said Zobi. "If it were any quieter, it wouldn't be the same neighborhood."

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Engberg/News

Construction worker Oscar Frias, 29, with the stereo he plays in front of his 135th St. home.

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