



ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT **(i.e., Generators, Pool Pumps, Air Conditioners etc.)**

The Planning Division's review of electrical and mechanical equipment in residential zoning districts is to ensure compliance with Novato Municipal Code (NMC) [Section 19.22.040](#) (Electrical and Mechanical Equipment).

This section establishes that electrical and mechanical equipment (i.e., air conditioners, generators, ventilation equipment, pool pumps etc.) should meet the maximum noise decibel (dBA) levels established by Table 3-5 of NMC [Section 19.22.070](#) (Noise and Construction Hours). Pursuant to Table 3-5, for **residential zoning districts** the maximum noise levels measured at property lines applicable to the operation of electrical and mechanical are as follows:

- **10 PM – 6 AM:** Maximum noise levels of 45 dBA
- **6 AM – 10 PM:** Maximum noise levels of 60 dBA

Many electrical and mechanical equipment do exceed these noise levels, however, manufacturers may provide sound attenuation options that can bring down the dBA in compliance with maximum noise levels. Additionally, if electrical and mechanical equipment is located closer than 15-feet to a side or rear property line, steps are required to ensure maximum allowable noise levels are met (e.g., sound attenuated covering, sound proofing material installed on fencing/walls, physical enclosures or barriers).

Generator Information

- ❖ A building permit is required for a permanently mounted electrical generator and an electrical transfer switch; all applicable building and zoning code requirements are enforced (i.e., NMC Section 19.22.040 and 19.22.070 as addressed above). See the Building Division's – [Minor Permits](#) webpage for more information on obtaining these types of permits.
- ❖ With the exception of noise levels (see above), portable generators are not regulated, and do not require a building permit.
- ❖ The City's noise ordinance, as applicable to electrical generators, **will not be enforced during an emergency situation (e.g., PG&E power shutoff)**
- ❖ If electrical generator operation continues after power is restored and there are concerns regarding noise, a noise complaint can be filed with the [Code Enforcement Division](#) at (415)-899-8989.
 - The [Police Department](#) can be contacted at (415)-897-1122 (Non-emergency Line) if the Code Enforcement Division is unavailable.

Submittal Materials (to be included in addition to information required for a Building Permit):

- **Scaled Site Plan:** Demonstrating proposed location of equipment in relation to property lines and existing structure(s)
- **Manufacturer's Equipment Information:** Information should include the equipment's dBA
- **Sound Attenuation Method(s):** If applicable, should include information demonstrating method.