

# Prevent Your Dream Home From Becoming A Noisy Nightmare

(NAPSA)—After settling into a new home, most homeowners look forward to the quiet time they'll spend leisurely reading the paper in the sunny breakfast nook while the aroma of coffee teases them from the kitchen. What they don't anticipate is the dishwasher clanging loudly as the breakfast dishes are cleaned or the disruption from the slow creak of the neighbor's garage door as it opens.

The decision to build a new home is both a financial and emotional investment, likely to be one of the most expensive of your life. As consumers, architects and builders begin to consider the size of the bedrooms, open floor plans and the kitchen layout, they may be overlooking one important factor—noise pollution.

According to the Occupational Safety & Health Administration, noise is considered any unwanted sound. While jet planes may come to mind, aggravating noise in the home could be as simple as the heavy footfall of someone rushing down a flight of stairs or a television blaring in the family room. A recent survey conducted by Owens Corning, a world leader in building materials systems and composite solutions, found that noise nuisance is a problem for 78 percent of homeowners and is high on the list of reasons why people change their residences.

## Noise and Your Home

According to Dr. Lily Wang, the need for residential noise control—the act of effectively managing noise within the home environment—is growing due to the popularity of open floor plans and increases in community noise. Wang, a professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln who specializes in architectural acoustics, says there are concerns regarding productivity for those who live and work out of the home.



**The layout and location of a home can affect the amount of environmental noise.**

“While people working from the home can avoid sounds of a typical occupational environment,” she says, “they may be dealing with other disruptive noises, such as the neighbor's dog barking or a cooling system automatically kicking on.”

## Noise and Your Health

While noise is viewed as bothersome, government officials categorize it as a growing health concern. According to the World Health Organization's (WHO) Guidelines for Community Noise, noise is an increasing public health problem. The WHO says noise above 80 to 85 dB, such as an alarm clock from two feet away or certain home appliances, may increase aggressive behavior and can cause hearing impairment after just one hour.

WHO also says noise can lead to other health issues, such as sleep disturbances and heart-related problems.

## Noise and the Solution

Portia Ash, business manager for residential noise control at Owens Corning, says it is important for consumers and professionals to stay current on available solutions to reduce residential noise.

“By specifically using particular building products created to reduce noise transmission during

construction,” says Ash, “you can eliminate unwanted sounds by up to 85 percent.”

Owens Corning developed a suite of noise control products, the QuietZone® Solutions, which can work in tandem to create a more comfortable home environment.

Before beginning construction of a new home, Wang recommends consumers, builders and architects utilize the following four-point checklist to reduce the risk of noise pollution in the home:

1. When choosing a lot for your new home, be attentive to community noise surrounding the area during both daytime and nighttime hours. Make sure you're aware of your proximity to traffic and the routine of the neighborhood.

2. Consider the floor plan from a noise perspective. For instance, you wouldn't want the clicking of a keyboard in a home office to wake up a sleeping child or spouse in a nearby bedroom.

3. Make sure there are no appliances situated on the opposite side of a main living or sleeping space wall. It may fit well with your layout, but the noise could prevent you from relaxing in the family room or bedroom.

4. Consider whether your home can grow with your lifestyle. If you or your spouse will be retiring in the near future, do your plans acoustically fit your potential routine?

“A home can be visually appealing, but if these factors are overlooked, consumers' enjoyment of the space will be disrupted by noise pollution,” says Wang. “The residential noise control category has been overlooked for decades. As the number of noise polluters increases, it's time our awareness also rises.”

Additional information is available at [www.owenscorning.com](http://www.owenscorning.com).