

vesteda 
THE GOOD LIFE



Quality lifestyle



A home means more than simply having a roof over your head. Vesteda considers your quality of life important, not only inside your residence unit but also in your surrounding environment. Where people live, there's always a potential for things to sometimes go wrong: junk on the balcony, a barking dog, or a neighbour drilling and hammering late in the evening – something not even noticed by some but a major source of annoyance for others. That's why we need to respect each other. A good quality of life is all about give-and-take. This brochure provides you with tips and guidelines on possible sources of annoyance and how you can best help prevent them.



Prevention is better than cure

Much of life's annoyances are not caused intentionally. The following tips can help you avoid becoming a source of annoyance yourself:

- Planning a party? Then inform your neighbours beforehand. Or invite them! Time for a barbecue? Then think about where you can best place the barbecue or fire pit to ensure that the wind does not blow the smoke into your neighbours' home or garden. An even simpler way of preventing possible annoyance to others is to say goodbye to your guests inside your home rather than outside.
- Planning to do some repairs or other odd jobs? Then don't surprise your neighbours with unexpected drilling noise and construction waste on the pavement, but inform them of your activities beforehand.
- Planning on installing a beautiful laminate floor in your residence? Then first ask Vesteda which criteria a hard floor covering needs to comply with. Did you know that if a laminate floor is not properly laid down, your neighbours will hear your every footstep?
- Try to make sure your washing machine isn't running early in the morning or late in the evening. To profit from lower electricity rates, do it during the weekend. Also make sure the washing machine is level and not installed against an inner partition wall. Finally, make sure the machine is standing on rubber feet. These measures will prevent your machine from producing a banging noise while spin-drying.
- Are you passionate about playing a musical instrument? This doesn't have to be a problem. Agree with your neighbours on the best time for you to practice.
- And remember that your radio and TV also have volume knob. Turning it down a bit isn't all that difficult. And with headphones on, you don't even have to think about it.
- Children need to be able to play and enjoy themselves, but that can sometimes cause quite a bit of noise. Fortunately, you can start teaching them from a young age to also think about the neighbours.
- Are you a dog owner? Help keep the pavement and playing areas clean and tidy, and let your dog out only in the appropriate areas. Of course, no dog likes to be left alone at home for excessively long periods of time. Some dogs will then start whining and barking and go on until the owner comes home!
- A clean and tidy balcony is also important: never deposit any water, waste or food remains outside, as this will only attract pigeons, mice and rats.



Annoyance or irritation? Then discuss it!

People are usually not even aware that they are bothering or annoying others, and are often surprised when their attention is called to it. It's worth taking the trouble to mention it, as a simple conversation can often do wonders. But what is the best approach? The following tips can be very useful:

- Don't go for talk when you're angry or upset. That's the best recipe for an argument and will of course not solve anything. Wait until you are calm before talking to the person causing the nuisance.
- Start by asking whether it's also a convenient time for the other party to discuss the matter. Otherwise, agree on a time that suits both parties, and take the time to discuss it properly.
- Call the attention of the person in question to the matter when the nuisance is actually being caused. If you wait too long, they may no longer remember the situation in question. If it's then also an opportune moment for them to discuss it, explain exactly what it is that is bothering you, why and at what times.
- Remain calm if your neighbours become angry during the conversation. Anger is often a cover for fear, anxiety or shame. If you stay calm, your neighbours will usually also calm down.
- Looking for an appropriate solution together works better than blaming each other. So before discussing the matter, think about what a good solution for the problem might be. Also give the other person the chance to think it through with you.

A letter can also help

Perhaps your neighbours don't respond appropriately when you mention the nuisance they are causing? Or perhaps you're a bit worried about talking to them? Then writing a letter to your neighbours may also help. Try to be as friendly as possible, for example by writing that you think your neighbours may be the source of the nuisance, instead of blaming them directly. In your letter, also ask if they are willing to talk to you about possible solutions and to contact you for that purpose. Remember to clearly indicate your name, address and telephone number.

If talking doesn't help

Usually, the issue is resolved by discussing it. Unfortunately, talking doesn't always help. Sometimes people are simply not willing to be reasonable. In such cases, we advise you to find out whether other neighbours are experiencing the same annoyance. There is strength in numbers.

Should the situation turn threatening, contact people in the vicinity and call the police or other emergency assistance service. Here again: there is strength in numbers. Write down exactly what has happened and when. If the nuisance continues, it's a good idea to report each such occurrence to the police. The police will generally take action only after several nuisance cases have been reported and an official report has been made. You can report instances of nuisance by calling the following number: 0900 – 8844.

The role of Vesteda

In principle, Vesteda is not a party in nuisance issues. It is a matter for the neighbours themselves to reach good working agreements. This also generally works better and more quickly. However, if you do not succeed in reaching a solution for the nuisance/annoyance, you can submit a complaint to Vesteda. You can of course also report the nuisance by telephone, but it is important that you always report it to us in writing as well. Within the framework of any official proceedings, only written complaints may be submitted as evidence. You may also submit reports via our website: www.vesteda.com. It goes without saying that we deal with all such information on a confidential basis.

Take the following into account when making a report:

- Have you made any attempts to solve the nuisance issue?
- The nuisance must be of a structural nature and not incidental.
- The only person who may submit a complaint is the person experiencing the nuisance.
- Anonymous reports are not processed by Vesteda.

Complaint form

As soon as we receive a complaint form that has been completed in full, we can evaluate the seriousness of the complaint. One of our staff will then contact you to explain how Vesteda intends to deal with your complaint. In the case of mediation, the person causing the nuisance is informed of the complaint by letter or by telephone and is asked to provide input for reaching a solution. If necessary, Vesteda will invite both parties for a meeting. Only in these cases, can we deal with the matter further.

Asking the court for a decision

If nothing else works, you can cooperate with us in taking the matter to court. In its role as the party renting out the residence, Vesteda is entitled to ask the court for a decision. This is possible only if more than one neighbour is subjected to the same nuisance, and they have reported this in writing. The court may decide to annul the rental contract of your neighbours, but it must have very good reasons for doing so. You should also take into account that a legal procedure is often a lengthy process and that you will be called up as a witness.





Overview of bodies dealing with nuisance issues

Noise

For a small fee, you can order the Geluidshinder buren (Noisy Neighbours) brochure from the Nederlandse Stichting Geluidshinder (NSG: Dutch Noise Nuisance Foundation), which contains additional tips on how to prevent and deal with noise nuisance. You can also visit their website at www.nsg.nl

Large waste/rubbish

Do you need to dispose of large objects of waste or rubbish? In many municipalities, a simple phone call is all that is needed to have it picked up. Otherwise, you can dispose of large waste objects by bringing them to a local waste collection station. For more information on waste related matters, visit the website of your municipal council.

Vermin/pests

You can obtain advice on how best to deal with vermin/pests from the appropriate municipal department or the local GGD (municipal health

organisation). The Knowledge Centre on animal pests sells consumer folders on how best to combat unwelcome pests in and around the home. Also visit their website at www.kad.nl.

Neighbourhood mediation

Neighbourhood mediation is a method for bringing neighbours back into contact with each other via third parties after a conflict. At the website of the Centre for Crime Prevention and Safety, you can find an overview of the municipalities in which neighbourhood mediators are active. You can also download a folder at their website: www.hetcvv.nl

Anonymous crime reporting

If you suspect that things are taking place in your neighbourhood which have a negative impact on safety, you can submit an anonymous report to the Anonymous Crime Reporting centre by calling 0800 7000 or going to their website at www.meldmisdadaanoniem.nl



www.vesteda.com

