

## Calls for warrant noise test

Expert calls for warrant noise test  
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New Zealand must include a standard noise test as part of a car's warrant of fitness if noisy exhausts are to be banished, a transport expert says.

Dr Chris Kissling, transport studies professor at Lincoln University, said testing noise emissions had to parallel the introduction of testing exhaust emissions.

The country's vehicle testing stations apply a **subjective test to exhaust noise and will fail a car if it is judged to be too noisy.**

The Ministry of Transport is looking into the possibility of an objective noise standard for cars.

Kissling said any vehicle that had modified exhausts should face a more stringent test during a warrant of fitness check, and pay an extra fee, to discourage modifications.

He said New Zealand lagged behind the rest of the world in introducing noise standards because it was too small a market to dictate to vehicle manufacturers.

That meant New Zealand had to wait for other countries to apply more stringent conditions and then import those vehicles.

"As other major markets start getting tougher on noise emissions, New Zealand will benefit," he said.

AdvertisementAdvertisementAny noise regulations could be enforced by authorities equipped with audio-monitoring equipment, Kissling said.

He said the technology existed in New Zealand to combine such monitoring equipment as part of speed and pollution-monitoring equipment.

An Australian study into the cost of traffic noise on the community – completed when Australia was amending its vehicle-noise legislation – estimated a mid-term benefit of tougher noise levels would be worth \$A2 billion.

Benefits included increased property values and better health from a quieter environment.

The cost of tighter regulations was in vehicle owners having to meet stricter requirements with higher-quality exhaust systems.

In New Zealand, traffic-noise minimisation is a recognised public health objective included in the New Zealand Health Strategy.

Sleep expert Dr Chris Drennan said that while a person's health would probably not be affected from one or two nights of lost sleep because of noisy exhausts, a person's quality of life would definitely suffer.

"Chronic sleep deprivation is what affects people's health, but I don't want to minimise the problem of losing one or two nights sleep."

He said people who had no sleep on Friday and Saturday nights would definitely suffer the next day.

"They will wake up grumpy the next day and that, coupled with the annoyance of knowing what did it, affects the enjoyment of life."

ENDS

Source: The Press

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