Data center noise can be a health hazard.

AI and hyperscale data center noise doesn't always stop at the property line. It can travel long distances, get into nearby homes, and affect residents' health and quality of life. Yet it is often overlooked when data centers are designed, sited, and permitted.

Start here

Choose your path

Each path is a short, step-by-step guide written for you. Every page can be downloaded and shared.

Neighbors

I live or work near a data center or one that has been proposed

Read the neighbors guide

Local officials

I am a local official involved with data center planning

Read the local officials guide

Browse all paths

Before a site is chosen

Before construction begins

After a facility is running

At a glance

Why this noise is different

−26 dB

How much a standard dBA reading discounts sound at 63 Hz, a common pitch in data center hum.

Measurement and sources →

83%

of survey respondents living near data centers or cryptocurrency mines could hear the noise inside their homes.

2026 Quiet Communities & Science for Georgia survey; small, self-selected sample of 103 people in 11 states.

Read the survey context →

24/7

Cooling and power equipment runs around the clock, including at night, when background noise drops and sleep is at stake.

Read the health evidence →

1968

The year the U.S. Surgeon General described how noise triggers the body's stress response. It has been studied continuously since.

History and references →

Who we are

Collaborative. Evidence-based. Solutions-driven.

Quiet Communities, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, works to reduce harmful noise and related pollution using a collaborative, evidence-based, and solutions-driven approach. We provide tools for local communities and encourage stakeholders—residents, policymakers, and environmental and health professionals — to work together.

Quiet Communities has only a small staff and therefore cannot provide direct assistance to communities experiencing data center noise. What we can offer is the information on this site, written so that it can be shared with neighbors, local officials and acoustical professionals.

About Quiet Communities

For the media

Find press releases, coverage featuring Quiet Communities, expert interviews, and media contacts.

Visit the press room

This is a real, measurable problem

You may be told a facility meets the official noise limit, imposed by an ordinance or permit, yet you experience noise that is clearly audible inside your home despite closing your doors and windows.

Most noise ordinances depend on A-weighted decibels (dBA), a standard measurement built to estimate sound we hear most easily, but that heavily discounts the contributions of low-pitched (low frequency) and tonal sound that are major components of data center noise. A data center's cooling systems (e.g., chillers, cooling towers, HVAC fans), backup generators, and co-located power sources can produce continuous, low-pitched, tonal sound: exactly the range that the dBA discounts most.

Low-frequency sound travels far and goes through walls and windows.

Measurements based solely on the dBA may suggest that the noise coming from a data center is harmless, yet still cause sleep disruption and adversely affect the health of the surrounding community.

Read the neighbor's guide →

Please support our important work

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