

HEY, LET'S KEEP THE NOISE DOWN!

Living next to a busy highway can be noisy. Learn about how WSDOT keeps the noise down for our neighbors and our fishy friends living in the lake.

HERE'S HOW WE MINIMIZE HIGHWAY NOISE FOR OUR NEIGHBORS

- Noise walls on the Eastside
- Highway lids on the east and west sides of Lake Washington
- Quieter, next-generation concrete pavement along the highway and ramps
- Taller-than-standard lane barriers
- Encapsulated bridge expansion joints
- A reduced speed limit (45 mph) on the Portage Bay Bridge



Quieter expansion joints on bridges.

New lid at 92nd Avenue Northeast.

HERE'S HOW WE ADDRESS NOISE DURING CONSTRUCTION



Removing old ramps in Montlake.



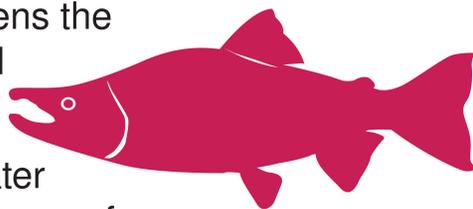
Driving piles in Union Bay.

Here are some of the things we do during construction to limit noise:

- Restrict the really noisy work, such as pile driving, to daytime hours
- Use back-up beepers that adjust their volume to the surrounding noise
- Use sound-dampening bed liners in our trucks
- Place noise shields on loud stationary equipment
- Limit engine idling on site

HERE'S HOW WE PROTECT OUR FRIENDS WITH FINS

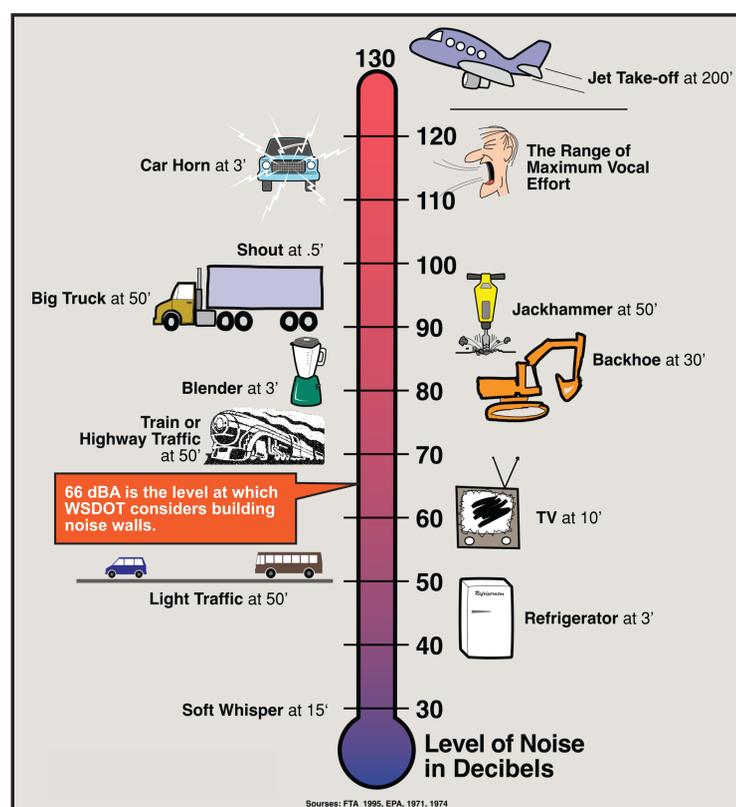
Significant in-water work is required to build a bridge across Lake Washington. Loud noise reverberating through water can harm or even kill fish. To protect fish, crews use special equipment that reduces the sound waves that travel through water. A bubble curtain (seen at right) produces a wall of bubbles around steel piles as they're driven into the lakebed. The curtain of bubbles reflects, absorbs, and weakens the sound coming from the steel pile.



Also, crews do certain in-water work only during approved times of the year when fish are not migrating through the project area.



A bubble curtain in use on Lake Washington.



HOW LOUD IS LOUD?

Noise or sound travels differently depending on the environment. Humans cannot hear all sounds that travel through the air. The loudness of sound is measured in units called decibels (dBA). The more decibels, the louder the sound. Sound has to be at a certain decibel for us to hear it.

The noise thermometer at left shows the relative sound levels of common activities.