

Ambient Noise Level:	The composite of noise from all sources near and far. In this context, the ambient noise level constitutes the normal or existing level of environmental noise at a given location.
Decibel, dB:	A unit for describing the amplitude of sound, equal to 20 times the logarithm to the base 10 of the ratio of the pressure of the sound measured to the reference pressure, which is 20 micropascals (20 micronewtons per square meter).
dBA:	A decibel (dB) is a unit of measurement for sound. A-weighted decibels, abbreviated dBA, are an expression of the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by our ears.
CNEL:	Community Noise Equivalent Level. The average equivalent sound level during a 24-hour day, obtained after addition of five decibels to sound levels in the evening from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and ten decibels to sound levels in the night from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. For example, a 45-dBA sound level at 8:00 p.m. in the evening would contribute as much to the overall day-night average as a 50-dBA daytime sound level at 8:00 a.m. in the morning.
$L_{eq}$ :	Equivalent Sound Level. The sound level containing the same total energy as a time varying signal over a given sample period. $L_{eq}$ is typically computed over 1, 8 and 24-hour sample periods.  NOTE: The CNEL represents daily levels of noise exposure averaged on an annual basis, while the $L_{eq}$ represents the average noise exposure for a shorter time period, typically one hour.
$L_{max}$ :	The maximum noise level recorded during a noise event.
$L_{min}$ :	The minimum noise level recorded during a noise event.
$L_n$ :	The sound level exceeded "n" percent of the time during a sample interval ( $L_{90}$ , $L_{50}$ , $L_{10}$ , etc.). For example, $L_{10}$ equals the level exceeded 10 percent of the time.
Noise Exposure Contours:	Lines drawn about a noise source indicating equal levels of noise exposure. CNEL contours are frequently utilized to describe community exposure to noise for noise compatibility planning.