

How to make a complaint about excessive outdoor lighting

GPANA Member Barbara Jones sent us this information after dealing with excessive lighting at 6961 W Sky Canyon Drive (extremely bright flood lights). This was in response to the issue and was put together by the Trails End HOA. Received on Feb 9, 2026.

Light pollution is considered an environmental complaint. It is associated with negative environmental and social effects, and complaints about excessive lighting are addressed by the Pima County Department of Environmental Quality (PDEQ). (Pima.gov; chat answer online)

The Pima County Department of Environmental Quality (PDEQ) administers code compliance for the Pima County Development Services Department (DSD). PDEQ Code inspectors investigate reported code complaints and assist property owners in correcting any violations and maintaining their property in compliance with Pima County Zoning, Building and Environmental codes.

Applicable Pima County Code in this situation is 2012 City of Tucson/Pima County Outdoor Lighting Code. Its intent is to control the obtrusive aspects of excessive and careless outdoor lighting usage while preserving, protecting, and enhancing the lawful nighttime use and enjoyment of any and all property. (See Chapter 1, section 101.3)

Pursuant to the Pima County Outdoor Lighting Code Map, which provides area designations for Pima County properties, the **property at 6961 W Sky Canyon Dr is designated E1c.** (see pima.gov)

Lighting Area E1c in the City of Tucson/Pima County Outdoor Lighting Code covers a 35 mile radius around the Kitt Peak summit, representing a strict dark-sky protection zone. It mandates fully shielded fixtures, low lumen levels, and strict controls on color temperature (typically 3000K or less) to minimize light pollution for astronomy. (See Chapter 3, section 301.1 & Chapter 4, section 401)

Key Requirements for E1c (Dark Skies):

- Shielding: All, or almost all, outdoor light fixtures must be fully shielded/cut-off (no light emitted above 90 degrees).
- Lumens: Strictly limited, with total site lumen caps based on acreage and land use, designed to be the most restrictive to protect Kitt Peak.
- Color Temperature: Outdoor lighting should generally be warm-toned (e.g., 3000K or lower) to reduce blue light.
- Prohibitions: Mercury vapor lights and searchlights are generally prohibited.
- Compliance: New or replaced lighting must meet these standards; existing non-conforming lighting must be brought into compliance upon certain triggers (e.g., development, change of use).

If the neighborly request to resolve the problem doesn't work, then recommend that each neighbor affected by this light pollution/light trespass submit a compliance complaint, along with photos as evidence, to the PDEQ. The process is quite simple and can be accomplished on-line. The more complaints filed, the more likely that PDEQ will make this a priority. File a complaint as follows:

By Phone: Complaints are accepted by the Pima County Department of Environmental Quality (PDEQ) **520-724-7400**. Request to speak to one of the PDEQ complaint coordinators who will take your information and assist you with any questions you may have.

In Person: Complaints are accepted at the *Pima County Department of Environmental Quality, 33 N. Stone Ave. Suite 700, Tucson, AZ 85701.*

By Mail: Complaints are accepted by mail at the *Pima County Department of Environmental Quality, 33 N. Stone Ave. Suite 700, Tucson, AZ 85701.*

Online: Complaints can be submitted online at pima.gov. Go to Department/Offices pull down and choose "Environmental Quality"; click on 'complaints' on the left menu; click on code complaints (takes you to the same form for either environmental or code complaints); click on box for 'code compliance complaint form.' You may submit photos electronically at CodeCompliance@pima.gov only if you provide your contact information.

Anonymous complaints can be submitted at the PDEQ website at PDEQ Code Complaint Form. If you choose to be anonymous, you can only submit evidence by mail (no return address) or in person. To mail photo(s), send them to PDEQ, 33 N. Stone Ave., Tucson AZ 85701, attention Complaint Coordinator. To deliver photos in person, please come to PDEQ's office located in the Bank of America Building at 33 N. Stone Ave., Tucson, 7th Floor between 8am and 5pm, Monday through Friday (***always reference the address or parcel # when submitting evidence!***).

Anonymous complaints, not meeting the above criteria, will have the longest response time due to PDEQ'S inability to follow-up with the complainant for information and/or advise them of the complaint status.

(See DEQ Compliance Complaint Form info @ pima.gov)

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