

Neighborhood Noise Issue – Goodman Community Center HVAC System

- Excessive noise generated by the GCC HVAC system was first brought to the Center's attention shortly after the system began operation, and a series of complaints were lodged each year by residents surrounding the Center.
- The Center's HVAC contractor made a number of attempts to dampen the noise generated by the system. There was an effort made to reduce the noise by constructing a noise barrier (walls) around the HVAC chilling unit(s) on the Center roof. While neighbors agreed that there was a noticeable reduction in the noise, many felt that the noise was still obtrusive and excessive, and asked for additional noise reduction measures.
- Subsequently, the noise barrier apparently caused the HVAC unit to over-work and overheat because the volume of air needed to cool the HVAC system was insufficient so the HVAC contractor removed one of the barrier walls to resolve the overheating problem. The modification to the noise barrier raised the level of noise where it was comparable to its original volume. The noise was so loud and intrusive that neighbors complained that when their windows were open, the noise of HVAC extended into their homes to such a degree that they were reluctant to have their windows open at all. While initially it was thought that the increased noise would be limited to the Wirth Park area, neighbors on Waubesa Street and as far away as Lafollete, St. Paul and Marquette Streets were impacted by the increased noise.
- Neighbors have contacted the Center each summer for updates on the HVAC contractor's efforts to reduce the noise. The result has been that for a number of years Becky has reported that the HVAC contractor is conducting a complete system analysis to improve overall system operations and efficiency. More recently she has stated that noise reduction is not likely to be a side product of the system improvements. In an effort to mitigate the noise, Becky has also indicated that she will insist the noise panel that was re-installed be removed again.
- Neighbors support the Center's efforts to improve the HVAC system operations but we remain concerned over delays in resolving the noise issue due to the harmful effects of the noise on our health and quality of life. As a result, the neighborhood requests that the SASYNA Council establish a means for monitoring the progress of the HVAC improvements and effects on the neighborhood, and that the first step in this be to ensure that the sound barrier panel that was removed be replaced by spring 2013.