

I first moved into Montgomery County in the 2010s. If you asked me then what a muffler delete was, I wouldn't have been able to answer you. I was able to drive or walk to wherever I needed to go without being disturbed by loud noise. However, in the last few years, that sense of peace that I thought would be commonplace in Montgomery County has been lost due to the rise in noise pollution from motor vehicles.

I, like most of the residents here, am just trying to get by with my day to day life. I drive to work in the mornings, drive back home in the evenings, and come home to enjoy some time with my family. However, the amount of noise pollution from other cars is making it increasingly more difficult for me to feel content living here. The aggravation I feel when I'm driving home from a long day at work and a car comes speeding and making ungodly loud noises is unparalleled. There is enough deterioration of civil behavior here as it is; increase in jaywalking, people weaving through traffic like it's a game, going 60 in 30mph residential areas... Can we at least have some peace and quiet while we're on these tumultuous roads? Do your citizens not deserve that much?

The [Montgomery County noise ordinance](#) states that the maximum allowable noise level in non-residential areas is 67 decibels. Even construction exemptions put a cap at 85 decibels. A muffler delete can cause a regular vehicle to make sounds exceeding 100-130 decibels; as loud as professional race cars. Why are these drivers allowed to get a free pass on following the law? Do consequences not exist for them? It really makes people like me, who follow traffic ordinances, feel like we're getting the short end of the stick.

Muffler deletion is also a form of aggressive driving, as it causes stress and panic amongst other drivers. A [2023 study from NIH](#) states: "A desire for a loud car with a modified muffler is predicted by being a man and higher scores on psychopathy and sadism... As each of the dark tetrad traits have been reported to be correlated with antisocial intent and criminal attitudes (Mededović & Kovačević, 2021), the present study predicted that each dark trait would positively correlate with the loud car scale aggregate, and because typically modifications to vehicles represent criminal activity, it was predicted that sadism and psychopathy would positively predict the aggregate of the car items."

It's not just on the roads, either. These cars pop up in places meant for casual dining and relaxation; Pike and Rose, Rio, Downtown Crown, etc. Imagine you are having lunch with a business partner, and in the middle of your conversation, you're constantly interrupted by loud noise. Or, if you have little ones like me, imagine taking them outside, only to have their play interrupted until they don't want to be outside anymore. I for one have found it nearly impossible to take my family outside without feeling on edge. It is a shame because I used to frequent Montgomery County's hot spots on the regular, before this became an issue. Drivers with muffler deletes have purposefully been roaring their engines in spaces that echo the noise as well, such as in

parking garages. Many seem to relish in their cars becoming even louder and more obnoxious, disregarding the other community members in the area.

If you think this issue is not a big enough threat right now, just wait until more and more drivers pick up on this trend. It will become too loud to hear just about anything where there's a road nearby. While I understand that some people like to garner attention or self confidence through altering their vehicles, I think there needs to be a better way to do so that doesn't put people's well-being on the line.

---