

A distinction between commercial/industrial and residential environments is recognized by part 15 class A and B designations for digital devices: a sort of RF “zoning law”. Reception of conventional analog radio, including medium-wave and short-wave broadcast and amateur stations, is often difficult or impossible in the commercial/environment: this fact is well-understood and accepted there, yet not to be tolerated in residential areas. Likewise, OET bulletin 65 supplement B restricts RF energy delivered by radio amateurs to the “uncontrolled environment” more severely than to the “controlled environment”, considering those in the uncontrolled environment to be innocent bystanders.

When power lines carrying BPL operate in commercial/industrial areas, they are in a kind of “controlled environment” where we should expect some increase in noise in an already noisy environment. Such interference would be entirely inappropriate, outside both letter and spirit of part 15, in residential areas. When these same power lines deliver BPL into residential areas, we expect they will be treated as class B digital devices subject to vigorous enforcement under part 15 rules.