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Blackmores profit surge leaves locals with sleepless nights

Simon Evans

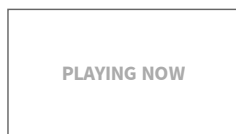
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Profits at vitamins maker Blackmores [are surging](#) but some of the locals living near a 24-hour-a-day production facility on Sydney's northern beaches are cranky and in need of the company's Sleep Sound Formula tablets.

Retired builder Philip Walker, lives about 200 metres from the facility at Warriewood, which works through the night to keep up with the enormous demand from China and other Asian countries. He says a group of six locals are getting more annoyed by the day with Blackmores.



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Stocks were steady after Fed Chair Janet Yellen signaled the central bank is set to raise interest rates this month.

"They talk about wellbeing all around the world, but they don't care about us neighbours," Mr Walker said.

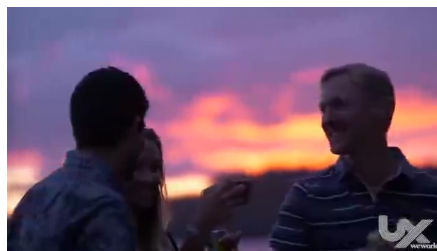
Blackmores chief operating officer Richard Henfrey says Blackmores has made changes to its operations and sympathises with the frustrations of those with residential properties in an industrial area.



Blackmores is a huge corporate success story and profits are surging but local residents near its Warriewood, Sydney, production facility say they are up all night because of the noise at the plant. Photo: John Woudstra

"Blackmores works hard to maintain our compliance with the terms of our council approval," Mr Henfrey said.

"We have an open dialogue with our neighbours and have implemented changes to our operations based on their suggestions. We do sympathise with the frustrations of our residential neighbours given their properties are in an industrial area and we will continue to work with them pro-actively."



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Mr Walker has lived at Warriewood for 30 years and says the large increase in demand for Blackmores' products has brought with it a constant stream of large trucks making deliveries, and an increase in noise levels at night.

The facility and campus-style headquarters over 25,000 square metres has more than 370 staff on site at Jubilee Avenue, Warriewood. Mr Walker said there needed to be a balance.

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Blackmores' chief executive Christine Holgate at the Warriewood campus. Photo: Peter Braig

"At night at one or two o'clock, the noises of pallets being dropped make it pretty hard," he said. The beeping of forklifts was also frustrating.

"It's fine for them to be up all night and making money, but we'd like some sleep," Mr Walker said.

He accused Blackmores of not sticking to the rules laid down by Pittwater Council under the Blackmores Campus Noise Management Plan, which dates back to August, 2006. Mr Walker spoke out against the noise management plan at a council meeting in 2006 and has been a long-time opponent.

That plan laid out certain upper limits for noise levels, which have a lower tolerance during the night time period between 10pm to 7am.

In the past 12 months, Blackmores has doubled its warehousing capacity at a property at Eastern Creek in western Sydney to help take the pressure off the increased activity at Warriewood.

Blackmores, led by chief executive Christine Holgate, is one of corporate Australia's big success stories and [on Thursday delivered another strong result](#) when it revealed that profits for the three months ended March 31 had more than doubled to \$27.3 million. Profits for the nine months ended March 31 rose to \$75.6 million from \$30.8 million the same time a year ago.

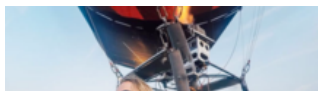
Blackmores shares climbed from [\\$25 in August, 2014, to hit \\$220.90 in early January](#) this year on the heavy demand from Chinese consumers for Australia's "clean and green" vitamins brands, and Blackmores staff were given handsome bonuses after a strong performance.

But the shares have come off slightly because of [confusion about the impact of new e-commerce regulations imposed in China](#), and the high multiple that Blackmores had been trading at. Blackmores uses retired Chinese tennis star Li Na as an ambassador in China to promote its products.

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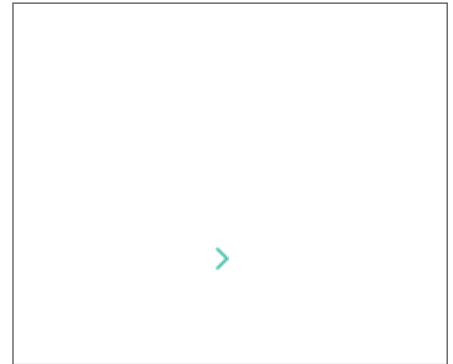
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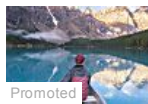
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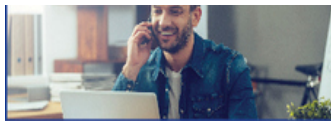


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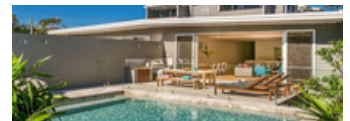
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