

February 8, 2010 Discussion with Toronto Residents Re: Regulating Small Engine Lawn and Garden Equipment in Toronto

Q: Why is the City holding discussions with Toronto residents and lawn and property maintenance companies on regulating small-engine lawn and garden equipment in Toronto?

A: Toronto is committed to reducing its greenhouse gas emission and City Council unanimously adopted the Climate Change, Clean Air and Sustainable Energy Action Plan in July 2007. One of the recommendations of that report was to report back on a plan to potentially ban the use of polluting small engine equipment (specifically "two-stroke" engines) in powering home and garden equipment by 2010. Small engine equipment includes leaf blowers, chainsaws, lawnmowers, trimmers, concrete saws and similar gas powered equipment used in landscaping. This equipment is heavily relied upon because of its high power to weight ratio and functionality in various orientations and the City is interested in reducing emissions from this source.

Older engines, particularly the "two-stroke" engine design, emit a high level of pollutants because the process causes partially combusted fuel products to discharge into the air. For example, a 2001 report from the Medical Officer of Health illustrated that a piece of two-stroke gas powered equipment from the year 2000 may emit as much as 498 times as much hydrocarbons, 49 times as much particulate matter and 26 times as much carbon monoxide as a car from the same year. Air pollution is a significant concern in Toronto. Toronto Public Health estimates that poor air quality contributes to 1,700 deaths and 6,000 hospitalizations each year in the City.

As a first step, City Council adopted a "Greening Small Engine Equipment Strategy" in May 2009 which outlines an accelerated timeline to replace older and inefficient equipment used in City operations along with alternative landscaping practices to reduce the need for powered equipment. The strategy also created a public education and equipment disposal program, "Cut it Out Toronto" which ran at Community Environment Days and collected almost 300 older pieces of gas powered equipment from residents for environmentally responsible decommissioning.

The next step in the strategy is to explore additional options and measures to advance the phase out of older, inefficient small engine equipment. City Council has asked staff to report back on regulatory options, including a potential ban that would take effect in 2012. Feedback from members of the public who would potentially be affected by this is critical.

Q: What will the City do with the information collected at the February 8, 2010 consultation? Will I be able to see it in written form?

A: Staff will summarize all Comment Sheets and comments received up to February 19, 2010 and a summary will be included in the staff report, "Greening Small Engine Equipment Strategy, Phase 2" scheduled to go to the City's Executive Committee on April 19, 2010.

The staff report Greening Small Engine Equipment Strategy, Phase 2 will be available on the Get Involved website at <http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/2strokes/index.htm>

Q: Where can I get additional information about the Regulating Gas Powered Small Engine Equipment discussions with Toronto residents and lawn and property maintenance companies?

A: For additional information on the consultations, please visit the City's Get Involved webpage at <http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/2strokes/index.htm>

Q: How can I share my comments if I did not attend the February 8, 2010 discussion?

A: Consultation with members of the public is vital to creating environmental programs that everyone can embrace. Event materials including the PowerPoint presentation, Comment Sheet, etc. will be posted on City's Get Involved website at <http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/2strokes/index.htm>

You can print off a copy of the Comment Sheet from the project website on the City's Get Involved webpage at <http://www.toronto.ca/involved/projects/2strokes/index.htm> and you can submit your Comment Sheet and/or comments by **February 19, 2010** in several ways:

Write: Small Engine Equipment Consultations
c/o Toronto Environment Office
City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.
21st floor, East Tower
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

E-mail: mmulqu@toronto.ca
Call: 416-338-2848
Fax: 416- 338- 0808
TTY: 416-397-0831

Q: Where can I get more information about the City's environmental initiatives including the framework for public engagement Change is in the Air: Toronto's Commitment to an Environmentally Sustainable Future?

A: To see what the City is doing to help combat climate change, including initiatives outlined in Change is in the Air, visit the City's Environmental Portal at www.toronto.ca/environment/index/htm. For information on what you can do now to help clean our air and protect our environment, visit www.livegreentoronto.ca