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To: [Economic and Community Development](#)
Cc: [Jane Robertson](#); [Victoria Joly](#); [Harold Rosenfeld](#); [Geri James](#); [Sharon Johnson](#); davidjmcghee@on.aibn.com; vice_president@bayviewvillage.org; [Monty McDonald](#)
Subject: Agenda item EC30.4 Report on Outstanding Noise Directives, May 30 ECDC Meeting
Date: Thursday, May 26, 2022 8:35:42 PM
Attachments: [image.png](#)

To: Members of the Economic and Community Development Committee

The Bayview Village Association* has reviewed the Report on Outstanding Noise Directives and would like to provide the following comments on restricting noise from two-stroke leaf blowers and other small-engine equipment.

1. Banning noisy two-stroke leaf blowers and other small-engine equipment will help reduce Toronto's ambient noise to safe levels. Toronto's urban noise is already at levels that cause adverse health effects. It averages 63 dBA (24-hour average) whereas the World Health Organization limit is 55 dBA (day and evening average) and 40 dBA at night. (Toronto's Medical Officer of Health, 2017 report, Health Impacts of Environmental Noise).
2. Complaints Toronto received about noise due to this equipment is not an accurate metric for gauging public concern about its adverse impacts. Yet, the report's conclusion not to regulate/ban this equipment seems to be based on this metric. Many citizens do not know that they can complain to the city. Some 7,000 concerned Toronto residents have signed the "BAN 2-stroke leaf-blowers and similar garden equipment" petition. <https://www.change.org/p/tell-toronto-city-council-ban-2-stroke-leaf-blowers-and-similar-garden-equipment>
3. Toronto is playing catch up with respect to regulating two-stroke leaf blowers and other small-engine equipment. Over 200 municipalities across North America already restrict leaf blower use. The attached Newton, Mass. Leaf Blower Ordinance is a good example of the type of regulation in place.
4. Other serious adverse health and environmental effects of this equipment are beyond the scope of this bylaw, but would be mitigated by restricting its use. These include:
 - a) Harm to workers operating them.
 - b) Release of toxic and carcinogenic compounds including unburned fuel (gasoline and engine oil) and engine exhaust into the air we all breathe. The exhaust includes large amounts of carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons (which are toxic, carcinogenic, and ozone-forming).
 - c) Leaf blowers disburse harmful airborne particles that can linger in the air for a week or longer. Anyone in the area will inhale these particulates.
 - d) Leaf blower air jets damage or destroy animal habitat including nests, birds, small mammals, and pollinators and beneficial insects living in leaf litter. They damage plants, remove beneficial topsoil and mulch, and desiccate soil.
 - e) Gasoline powered equipment contaminates neighbourhood air.
 - f) Grass clippings and organic dust generated by leaf blowers foul our waterways.
 - g) Gasoline spills during refueling exacerbate climate change.

5. Any education programs regarding leaf blowers must include public education about alternatives to leaf blowers:

- Create a less lawn/no lawn landscape. No-mow ground covers are good alternatives to grass.
- Use a mulch mower and leave grass clippings on the lawn where they will quickly decompose and provide nutrients for the lawn.
- Use brooms to sweep clippings off the walk and drive.
- Use rakes to collect leaves in the fall.

Two-stroke leaf blowers and other small-engine equipment have significant adverse health and environmental impacts on Torontonians and our environment. Toronto must act now to restrict/ban two-stroke leaf blowers and other small-engine equipment.

Sincerely,

Gail Bebee
Environment Committee
Bayview Village Association


*The Bayview Village Association is a non-profit organization founded in 1956 to promote the welfare of the residents of the Bayview Village area of ward 17, Don Valley North.

WHY THE CHANGE?
In 2017, the Newton City Council passed a Leaf Blower Ordinance (law) to regulate the use and to control the noise associated with these machines.

KEY PROVISIONS OF THE LAW
The use of all leaf blowers above 65 decibels is prohibited in the City of Newton. There are no exceptions.

65^{dB} Category I
Measured at 50m (164ft) per ANSI S1.75-2

Dates and hours of permitted use of leaf blowers meeting the noise requirement are strictly regulated.
Violators will be fined.




SEASONAL BAN FOR ALL GAS-POWERED LEAF BLOWERS
Dates Prohibited: The Summer Months Memorial Day through Labor Day.
Only one electric or battery-powered leaf blower per lot is allowed to be used between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Gas-powered leaf blowers, regardless of decibel levels, are prohibited during the summer.

DATES OF ALLOWED USE
Gas, electric or battery-powered leaf blowers labeled at or below 65 decibels are allowed for nine months a year from the day after Labor Day to the day before Memorial Day.

HOURS OF ALLOWED USE
Mon - Fri: 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Saturdays: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sundays and Legal Holidays: Prohibited except by residents on their own property between 9:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., and by owners of 30 or more contiguous acres of property between 9:30 a.m. and noon.

ENFORCEMENT
Leaf blower violations should be reported to Inspectional Services at (617) 796-1061 and/or
To the Newton Police Department at (617) 796-2100. Wait for the prompt for dispatch.



PENALTIES
1ST VIOLATION: Written warning will be given to the person or company using the leaf blower.
2ND VIOLATION: \$100 fine
3RD VIOLATION: \$200 fine
4TH VIOLATION: \$300 fine
EACH SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION: \$300 fine
Property owners will be notified of the penalties.

