

**From:** [Gasbusters](#)  
**To:** [Infrastructure and Environment](#)  
**Subject:** [External Sender] IEC Meeting Agenda item 2025.IE21.4- Transitioning Towards Zero-Emission Outdoor Power Equipment  
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**May 5, 2025**

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To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee, Toronto City Council  
iec@toronto.ca

**Re: Agenda item 2025.IE21.4- Transitioning Towards Zero-Emission Outdoor Power Equipment**

Dear Madam Chair and Committee Members,

Gasbusters is a volunteer organization that has over 600 members across Toronto. They are a mix of apartment and house dwellers. Our efforts are also supported by 18 Residents' Associations. Since our inception a few years ago, we have advocated for a ban of gas-powered leaf blowers and associated garden equipment based on concern for residents and operators alike related to the adverse health and environmental effects caused by noise and harmful fumes.

As we approach the May 7 IEC Meeting at which the future of two-stroke small engine equipment in Toronto will be debated, we submit the following

comments with regard to the City Staff Report, and Recommendations by The Executive Director, Environment, Climate and Forestry:

Gasbusters supports **OPTION B** as the starting point for discussion based on City Council's adoption on July 19-20, 2023 of a decision under motion **IE5.1**. Specifically, City Council expressed its support for a ban on the use of two-stroke small engine equipment in Toronto, and directed certain City Staff Departments to identify the resources required to develop and implement a ban on two-stroke equipment. The City's subsequent survey of Toronto residents, which had a high level of participation and engagement, indicated that more than 70% were in favour of a transition to zero transmission outdoor equipment.

OPTION B nonetheless requires refinement. It outlines a timetable for implementation of a ban of two-stroke equipment, but it is excessively long, and prioritizes the interests of contractors, many of which are located outside of Toronto, and of the relatively small percentage of residents who own and use it.

In his presentation to the IEC on November 29, 2023, Joe Salemi, Executive Director of Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association, advocated for a phased approach to a ban; **“A phased approach allows landscape businesses to gradually replace their two-stroke equipment with more sustainable alternatives, avoiding abrupt changes that could strain their operations and finances. With the typical lifespan of equipment sitting around three years, this process would be relatively swift as landscaping company owners — most of whom are starting to invest in greener options — are constantly replacing equipment as it ages out.”**

Those remarks are now a year and a half old, and their context indicates that the landscape industry acknowledged at that time the trend away from two-stroke equipment and the increasing viability of zero transmission alternatives.

If we take the three year equipment cycle to which Mr. Salemi refers, and factor in the 18 months that have elapsed since his address, we should be looking at an effective date for a ban of no more than 18 months from now, or **January 1, 2027**. This timing would fall in line with his prognosis of a ‘relatively swift’ transition, and would mobilize Landscape Ontario to intensify its efforts with manufacturers to develop equipment specifications to suit its members’ preferences.

Furthermore, no seasonal exemption to utilize two-stroke equipment during the period from October 1 to November 30 should apply beyond January, 2027.

The fact is that, in many cases, leaves are simply blown from private properties onto the street, from which the first wind circulates them haphazardly in a multitude of directions. There should be no exemption to perpetuate the usage of two-stroke equipment for this meaningless activity.

Another consideration for IEC is that a prolonged transition to zero transmission equipment adds years to the exposure of machine operators to harmful noise and hazardous fumes.

Lastly, we would expect that the IEC and City Council would encourage City Staff to consider longer term cost savings associated with a more rapid transition towards zero transmission equipment, rather than dragging out the process which may lead to further investment in two-stroke devices which will be made obsolete and perhaps subject to replacement subsidies.

To conclude, we ask the IEC to reinforce its environmental, health and climate commitments by voting in favour, and recommending to City Council adoption of **Option B**, but with a tighter timeline to ban usage of two-stroke equipment effective January 1, 2027, with no seasonal exemptions beyond that date.

Thank you,

Dundee Staunton,

### **Gasbusters Organizing Committee**

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#### **About Gasbusters**

Gasbusters is a growing group of Toronto residents and residents' associations that wants a BAN on the use of gas-powered leaf blowers and related garden equipment in Toronto. Our membership includes some 600 individuals and 18 resident associations:

- Avoca Vale Residents
- Bayview Village Association
- Bedford Park Residents Organization
- Church Wellesley Neighbourhood Association
- Deer Park Residents Group
- Eglinton Park Residents' Association
- FONTRA The Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations
- Friends of Farquharson
- Grange Community Association
- High Park North Residents Association
- Lytton Park Residents' Organization
- North Rosedale Residents Association
- Rathnelly Area Residents Association
- Republic Residents Association
- South Armour Residents Association
- South Eglinton Davisville Residents Association
- West Willowdale Neighbourhood Association
- Wychwood Park Residents Association.

Gasbusters also has the support of these community partners:

- Climate Action Network, Canada
- David Suzuki Foundation
- Toronto Environmental Alliance (TEA)
- Climate Fast
- Coalition for Green & Quiet Neighbourhoods, Montreal
- Friends of Cedarvale

- Green Neighbours Network
- Green 11, University-Rosedale
- Lakeshore Environmental Gardening Society
- No More Noise Toronto



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