

To: Infrastructure and Environment Committee (IEC)
iec@toronto.ca

Re: Agenda Item IE 25.13 High Pollution Days and Two Stroke Engines

October 28, 2025

Dear Committee Members,

Approximately two and a half years ago, the IEC gathered to discuss the logic for a ban of two stroke engine-powered equipment, including gas leaf blowers. The air outside was thick with wildfire smoke. There was a sense of urgency that the City should act against a source of pollution whose use was elective- related to lawn care, not to any critical municipal services. The vote at the Committee, and at City Council shortly thereafter, was to instruct City staff to investigate the feasibility of a ban of two stroke equipment. There was universal recognition that a discretionary source of pollution should be eliminated in the face of an ongoing climate emergency.

Last May, the IEC and City Council elected to restrict the campaign of eliminating two stroke equipment to City operations only, and to conduct an education program to encourage residents and private contractors to pursue zero emission alternatives. While we applaud the City for its own efforts, we argue that, within the context of public education, a message of some force has to be sent to citizens and contractors alike that reminds them that the use of gas-powered equipment is needlessly using up our carbon budget, in Mark Carney's words. This is particularly important when the evidence of environmental degradation is before us in the form of air pollution levels that are dangerous to the public.

We therefore endorse Councillor Saxe's recommendation before the Committee, and request that it be extended to include four stroke, and any other fossil-fuel powered equipment whose operation is elective and not vital to the interests of citizens of Toronto as a whole. This would support public education with action, and remind all stakeholders that gas-powered devices represent an environmental and health hazard that should be mitigated by controlled usage as we transition to zero emission alternatives.

Thank you for your consideration,
Dundee Staunton,
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