

February 26, 2021

**TO: Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms
City of Atlanta, GA**

**Copy: Council President Felicia A. Moore
Council Members:
Michael Julian Bond, Matt Westmoreland, Andre
Dickens, Carla Smith, Amir R. Farokhi, Antonio
Brown, Cleeta Winslow, Natalyn Archibong, Jennifer N.
Ide, Howard Shook, J.P. Matzigkeit, Dustin Hillis,
Andrea L. Boone, Marci Collier, Joyce M. Sheperd.**

From: [Larry Will](#) ¹



Reference:

<https://saportareport.com/atlanta-seeking-to-curb-use-of-gas-powered-leaf-blowers/sections/reports/david/> ²

Dear Mayor Moore:

I see from the referenced document on the Web that the leaf blower is now an issue in Atlanta. The question is, should you or should you not ban gasoline-powered leaf blowers? Judging from the suggestion that the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division should be confronted with this issue, it appears that Atlanta concedes that it would have a difficult time banning leaf blowers. The suggestion that people just leave the leaves on the lawn has the

potential to [damage the grass](#) permanently. Not only that, I don't think the city should be encouraging people to not groom their properties. Most of what you hear, as it was stated in the referenced article, is incorrect or grossly overstated. Those making these statements do not have the firsthand knowledge or background to be able to tell when their quote, taken from a biased source, is actually true. Just about everything you hear is based on opinion, either their own or that of someone else's.

It should be of concern to you that what you mostly hear from anti-leaf blower advocates is negative. If I were in your position, I would like to know the other side of the issue and whether what you are being told is factual or not.

Here are some very important facts to consider, as they relate to gasoline powered leaf blowers:

- The only true issue is that some of them are noisy. But quiet ones at 65 dB(A), measured at 50 feet, are universally available from several manufacturers.
- Quiet leaf blowers, are only 85 dB(A) at the ear of the operator. Hearing protection is not required according to OSHA.
- Health hazard and environmental impact issues are overstated if not untrue.
- The operator is more at fault for the blower controversy than is the leaf blower, using the leaf blower at inappropriate times and for extended periods of time.
- If you are interested in being educated about the leaf blower, its use and the issues surrounding it, this document is where you will find the other side of the story, and the truth, I might add.

Who am I to tell you all this? I am a former Vice President of Engineering for Echo Inc., a leading manufacturer of powered handheld lawn care products. I do not live or work in your community, but what I share with you in this document will not be heard from anyone else in Atlanta. I am not a stakeholder in this leaf blower issue, and I am not trying to interfere with any decision you deem necessary. I just want you to know the other side of the story. More importantly, I am not trying to sell anything. I am just trying to prevent problems for those living in your community. I submit this information as a public service to you, to your city council and to the people that use leaf blowers in Atlanta. That includes the residents that presently own leaf blowers and the contractors that depend on them to make a living. If you are still uncomfortable with trusting me, someone from outside your community, click [here](#)¹ if you want to see my qualifications and credentials. In this paper, I have provided many links to documents that support the facts I present.

You may be thinking that because there are other cities that have banned leaf blowers, you can't go too far wrong to follow their precedent. One should look into the result of creating such a ban. How will it be enforced? Will homeowners with

leaf blowers be upset? How does this impact the elderly? What will be the cost impact to the homeowner, landscape contractor and the city of Atlanta? Will current users comply with your ordinance? Will people go back to rakes and brooms or will they just leave the debris where it lies? Are battery powered leaf blowers truly a replacement for a gasoline version, performance wise?

You can talk to council members from cities that already have a ban, but these are the people that wanted the ban in the first place, and you know what they will say. You need to talk to the enforcers, local lawn care contractors, and homeowners to learn the true impact.

You may not know this, but there are groups of people, from outside your community, working hard to have gasoline-powered leaf blowers banned throughout the country. Because many cities consider noise a weak reason for banning blowers, these organized and well financed ban advocates look for other reasons. The concept of citing health hazards as a reason for a ban was initiated by Peter and Susan Kendall of Orinda, California. You can read all about them in the [New Yorker, October 25, 2010 issue](#)⁴. Ms. Kendall said, "I would (in the future) try to get the law classified not under noise but under health and safety..."

So, the Kendall's and many others have searched the Internet for statements and enlisted dignitaries that would support their mission, regardless of the truth. I'm sure you know from your experience with the media that if something is said often enough, by many different people, or put in print by many sources, regardless of the facts, people will tend to believe it as being true. Others will then proceed to confidently restate these unproven hypotheses emphatically. I think this is called "[spinning](#)"³.

The local people on the other hand, that are trying to convince you to ban leaf blowers, such as Ms. Ide, are well meaning, conscientious, and dedicated to improving the environment. But they are not professionals. What I mean by not being professional is that none of them are in any way professionally involved in the use, development, or accreditation of gasoline-powered yard care products. I venture to say that they themselves have likely never even used these products personally and therefore have no concept of how valuable they are to homeowners and professional users, let alone their environmental impact so blatantly expressed.

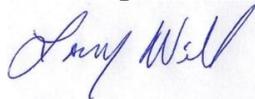
Am I biased? Sure. But my bias is to present the facts, based on 25 years of working as an engineer in the yard care industry, designing these products and dealing directly and personally with organizations such as the California Air Resources Board (CARB), the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Underwriters Laboratories (UL), and the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI). Do I want to preserve the gasoline-powered leaf blower? Yes! But only because I see banning it is

unnecessary since noise is the issue and quiet leaf blowers are available today. There is a [label](#) ²³ on the unit that tells you what the sound level is, making it easy to enforce your noise restriction, should you choose. In time, when battery-powered units have sufficient power and performance, they will replace gasoline power by their own merits.

One more thing. The statement in the referenced article, *“Two-stroke motors burn 60% to 70% of the fuel, and the rest is blown into the air as particulate matter, which is too small to filter before you breathe it into your lungs,”* is pure bunk. This person is mixing his facts. Particulate matter is not a byproduct of gasoline engines, rather it is from diesel engines. If the author is referring to hydrocarbon emission, 30% of the fuel ingested used to go through the engine unburned, but not anymore. As of 2005, this type of emission has been reduced by 85 to 90%.

Please, read the attached appendix, with links to references, to learn more facts about the leaf blower and its use.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Larry Will". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name and contact information.

Larry Will. BSME, Leaf Blower Information Specialist, ECHO Inc.
Vice President Engineering (retired)
Phone: 479-256-0282,
Email: info@leafblownoise.com
Website: <https://www.leafblownoise.com/>

Click: [APPENDIX](#) for details.