

March 15, 2019

TO: Mayor Teresa A. Trouvé

**CC: Board of Trustees
Garden City, NY**

From: [Larry Will](#)



Reference: <https://www.gcnews.com/articles/village-board-considers-regulations-for-gas-powered-leaf-blowers/>

I see that once again leaf blower use is being discussed in Garden City, according to the referenced article. Most of you will remember that this is not the first time I have written to you concerning leaf blowers (copy attached), but if I may, there are just a few updates and suggestions I would like to share with you at this time.

I am a former Vice President of Engineering for Echo Inc., a leading manufacturer of powered lawn care products. As I said in my first letter, the only real issue is leaf blower noise. [Exhaust emission](#) and [particulate matter](#) or [PM10 and PM2.5](#), are not viable issues for the leaf blower. I could go on, reiterating the reasons why these and all other complaints are invalid, except for noise, but that would waste your time for I have already done that earlier. Besides, that would just bring you right back to the noise problem.

When talking about noise, there are [many things to learn](#) about sound in order to understand what it truly is. But to simplify the concept, consider that sound is

nothing more than the movement or vibration of air molecules. As they move, ever so slightly, the ear can sense its magnitude and frequency. In other words, you can easily decide if it is easy to listen to or does it irritate you? It is this subjective evaluation that is at the bottom of the leaf blower issue. I admit that there are leaf blowers in service that are nothing but irritating. And when they are used at inappropriate times, they can be quite offensive. These are the blowers that should be removed from service.

It is possible to measure sound magnitude, but not so easy to measure an irritation quotient. So, the best we can do after reducing sound level is measure and publish the result. However, in the process of reducing sound, the irritating noise or scream from the main air impeller has also been removed. On gasoline powered leaf blowers, that [number is provided](#) on the unit, making it easy to determine magnitude in the field. That means an ordinance can stipulate the noise limit based on that number and enforcement becomes easier. Units indicating 65 dB(A) at 50 feet are considered quiet blowers.

Because sound volume is expressed in decibels, which is a logarithmic value, the actual number can be misleading. The fact is, for every six dB(A) reduction in sound magnitude, the actual volume is reduced by 50%. This is hard to believe for the average person, so the best thing to do is to witness an actual sound comparison, but I know that it's not easy to arrange this. An alternative is to check out the [video](#) of an actual demonstration on my website. The difference between a loud blower and one that is quiet is impressive. You might be surprised to learn that battery powered leaf blowers are not as quiet as you have been led to believe. In addition, keep in mind that battery powered leaf blower performance is just not there yet for the professional.

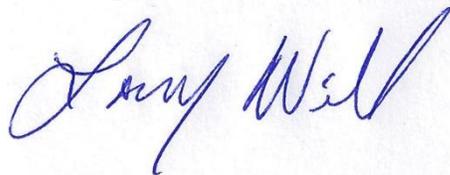
In the automotive industry, years ago, cars and trucks were unsafe to drive, and their engines generated a lot of exhaust emission. Were they banned? No. It's because the issues were corrected by this industry. The same is true of the lawn care industry. Manufacturers have invested millions of dollars in tooling, testing and new assembly lines in order to provide quiet leaf blowers, a valuable and viable alternative to noisy blowers. There is no real reason to ban leaf blowers that have been improved.

To arrive at a bill that will reduce leaf blower noise with less controversy, here are some suggestions:

1. Require that gasoline powered leaf blowers be limited to 65 dB(A) in residential areas as measured per ANSI Standard B175.2. In other words, ban the noisy leaf blower, not all gasoline powered leaf blowers.
2. Develop printed materials for the purpose of educating and informing the private user, as well as the professional, on how to safely and properly use a leaf blower, including acceptable hours of use. Here are some examples:
https://www.leafblownoise.com/Pointers_Operating_Leaf_Blower_flier.pdf
<https://www.leafblownoise.com/LeafBlowerTraining.pdf>

Thank you for taking my comments under consideration. If you should need information that is not clearly addressed here or on my website, please contact me and I will do whatever I can to help, at no cost to you, including further research on your behalf.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Larry Will". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Larry" and last name "Will" clearly distinguishable.

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