

April 5, 2017

## **Supervisor Saladino and Oyster Bay Council Members**

RE: Leaf Blower Legislation

I just read an article on [newsday.com/long-island/nassau](http://newsday.com/long-island/nassau) that tells of your interest in addressing leaf blower noise and pollution. I am a retired Vice President of Engineering for ECHO Inc., a leading manufacturer of leaf blowers. As an expert in the field, I disseminate 'up to date' information about modern leaf blowers throughout the United States and Canada. I have consulted with over [155 cities](#) working to resolve a leaf blower noise problem. I can also help you to understand the issues surrounding the leaf blower and arrive at an informed decision and workable solution to the leaf blower issue in Oyster Bay.

My assumption is that you will consider allowing electric leaf blowers, but you should know that their use is quite limited. For the home owner, they may work well enough, but for the professional, these blowers are seriously underpowered. The contractor must be able to get his job done quickly in order to make a profit and electric blowers, either corded or cordless, cannot provide that type of efficiency.

The two reasons driving this issue, noise and pollution, are discussed in detail at my [website](#). Noise can be reduced to a point where there will no longer be any complaints if you allow only quiet leaf blowers at 65 dB(A) measured at 50 feet per the industry Standard. Your enforcement agency need not measure this value in the field for noise levels are labeled on the unit by the manufacturer. If there is no label, it is simply too noisy to label and consequently will not comply with your noise requirement. Chances are you are dubious about my claim, thinking that although they might in fact be quieter, they are still too noisy. Sir, you need only ask one of your constituents familiar with leaf blowers to give you a sound comparison demonstration. It is important that you compare a blower at 77 dB(A) with one at 65. I know you will be impressed. If you need help with that, I can arrange for a sound demonstration at your convenience.

Now please don't think that I am just trying to sell ECHO leaf blowers, although it would be nice if that were to happen, because we have been selling quiet leaf blowers for 20 years and I can guarantee that there are already many quiet leaf blowers in your community. Half of the leaf blowers we offer are at 65 dB(A) which is a 75% reduction in sound. As for the rest of our product line, more than half of these are at 70 dB(A), which is a 50% reduction in sound. The problem is, if only one noisy leaf blower is being used in a neighborhood, all leaf blowers are reviled and that is what I am trying to address. Many cities take the step of outlawing noisy blowers and this action is well received by landscapers. Why? Given the choice of a quiet leaf over the alternative, well you can see why they would support this type legislation.

You know, quiet leaf blowers, blowers at 65 dB(A), are as quiet as electric units. In most cases, they are even quieter because electric blowers scream and quiet blowers do not. So the argument that electric blowers are always quieter has no validity. This can be demonstrated at a comparison test as well, along with the noisy gasoline blower mentioned above.

As for pollution, there is only exhaust pollution and dust. Exhaust pollution has not been a problem since January 1, 2005 for that is when all small hand held engines had to meet a very stringent emission requirement per a federal mandate. Yes, there are older and dirtier units still in service, but if you require quiet leaf blowers, you will automatically solve the exhaust problem, assuming they are replaced by newer units.

Dust is not really a blower issue as much as it is an operator issue. A training program is the best way to deal with that. Pamphlets are available for you to copy as part of your training or information program. This issue would exist regardless of the type of blower being used, electric or gas, if the operator is inconsiderate.

I would like to give you some insight on the people drawn in to this issue. I have attached an article that addresses this important matter based on my own personal experience over the past 22 years. What you will learn from this is that the only way to satisfy everyone involve is to outlaw all gasoline powered leaf blowers, except for the quiet ones. And then allow them to be used all year round.

It is good that you are checking with Yonkers about their leaf blower ordinance and the summer ban. Be sure to talk directly with their enforcement agency. Leaf blower ban supporters will not tell you this, but I think you will find that they are unable to enforce it. What you want is for the landscape service providers to support your ordinance voluntarily and to accomplish that you should have your people meet with them outside of a council meeting. It is an important subject to them and it will take more time than that allowed at a council meeting for these stakeholders to properly expose all the issues.

If you should need information that is not clearly addressed on my website or the document I have provided, please contact me and I will do whatever I can to help, including further research on your behalf.

Best regards,

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

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