



## The City of Burlingame OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

### **Important Information regarding Leaf Blower Ordinance Changes Effective July 1, 2012**

Over the past year, the City of Burlingame has been working with the Bay Area Gardeners Association (BAGA) and the Community Environmental Council (CEC) to develop changes to the City's current leaf blower ordinance. Although the original recommended ordinance change would have banned the use of gasoline powered leaf blowers in the City of Burlingame, as a result of subsequent meetings with BAGA and CEC, the new ordinance allows gardeners the use of leaf blowers on specific days of the week as illustrated on the attached brochure.

The new ordinance, which goes into effect as of July 1, 2012, requires that all commercial gardeners have appropriate documentation affixed to their leaf blower that certifies the sound levels do not exceed 65 decibels. To help avoid citations and disruptions to your gardening work in the City of Burlingame all gardeners should have your leaf blowers certified by the Burlingame Public Works Department.

The location for having your leaf blower tested is the Burlingame Public Works Corporation Yard at 1361 N. Carolan Avenue. The address is north of Broadway and is accessible from Rollins Road by turning West on Marsten Drive. The fee for testing is \$25 for up to five blowers. Upon passing the noise testing, the City will issue a compliance certificate decal which should be displayed on the respective leaf blower. No decibel testing will be required for those leaf blowers that are new and have a manufactures decibel certification. In those situations the fee will be \$5 per leaf blower certification decal. To schedule an appointment to have your equipment tested please call (650) 558-7685 between the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday to Friday except for holidays.

We want to avoid the necessity of issuing \$50 citations, so we urge you to read closely the enclosed information relative to the ordinance changes. Use of leaf blowers on single-family and duplex properties is restricted to one day a week as delineated on the attached map, whereas parcels zoned R3 /4, multi-residential properties (three or more units), are allowed to use leaf blowers on two days a week. It is important to note that operation of leaf blowers on the weekend is restricted to property owners only. Finally use of leaf blowers on properties located east of Highway 101 is only restricted on Sundays.

As you may be aware, the changes in this ordinance are motivated by the health issues associated with the use of leaf blowers for both those operating the equipment, as well as others in the community adversely impacted from the operation of leaf blowers. For those reasons the City will be contacting all properties in the city encouraging them to discuss the environmentally responsible choice of discontinuing the use of leaf blowers in the maintenance of their properties.

We realize that many gardeners feel the discontinuation of leaf blowers would result in the need to increase the cost of property maintenance for their customers. So our educational material to residents will be encouraging them to discuss the non-leaf blower option with their gardener so that residents can decide whether they are willing to pay more for the environmentally responsible option. To assist you in responding to those inquiries from your customers, enclosed you will find information on the non-leaf blower options.

Although we regret the impact this ordinance change will have on those providing gardening services to our residents, we are pleased we were able to structure changes that would accommodate the gardeners need to use leaf blowers while at the same time reducing the number of days that residents are subjected to the adverse impacts of such use. We appreciate your support and doing all you can to be prepared for the implementation of the new ordinance as of July 1, 2012.

James Nantell, Burlingame City Manager