

September 30, 2019

Director Rosemarie Kelley
Office of Civil Enforcement (OCE)
Mail Code: 2201A
United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Director Kelley:

My name is Larry Will. I am a former Vice President of Engineering for ECHO Inc., a leading manufacturer of lawn care products. ([More](#))

I write letters to city councils considering the banning of gasoline powered leaf blowers, providing them with facts about any issue, which incorrectly describes the performance of leaf blowers. Am I correct in assuming that cities banning the use of leaf blowers, citing hydrocarbon exhaust emission as the reason for their ban, are in violation of Sec. 209 of the Federal Clean Air Act, 1990?

“No State or any political subdivision thereof shall adopt or attempt to enforce any standard relating to the control of emissions from new motor vehicles or new motor vehicle engines subject to this part. No State shall require certification, inspection, or any other approval relating to the control of emissions.”

The actual reason cities are asked to ban leaf blowers is because they are noisy. But not all gasoline powered leaf blowers are loud. Those that are at 65 dB(A) measured according to the ANSI Standard B175.2, are [very quiet](#). Most of the time, because there are quiet blowers available and because council members want to avoid the controversy between those that dislike them and those that need them, they choose not to ban them. In order to apply more pressure on city councils, however, ban advocates have taken to citing exhaust emission as the reason they want them banned.

They have started to attack the blower’s hydrocarbon emission. There are several websites that dedicate themselves to destroying the gasoline powered leaf blower in favor of battery powered units using this argument. They encourage cities to use this claim in their efforts to convince the residents, and therefore the voters, that blowers should be banned. They like to say that for two stroke engines, one third of the fuel entering the engine passes straight through the engine unburned. I explain on my website and in letters to city councils that this is no longer the case and hasn’t been since January 2005 on engines of this size. I and the industry as a whole, object to this attack on hydrocarbon emission, especially after spending millions of dollars to meet the EPA and CARB Standards. And believing that it is illegal to justify a ban based on emission per the Federal Clean Air Act, 1990, it is doubly frustrating.

Click [here](#) to see one example of where anti-leaf blower advocates get their false facts.

Click [here](#) to understand the magnitude of this problem.

With all these exaggerated, incorrect and misleading emission statements from biased sources saturating the minds of the technically uninformed, it is my hope the you can provide me with written clarification of Sec. 209 as it applies to leaf blowers so I can properly deal with this issue.

Best regards,

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

For information about Echo Inc.: <http://www.echo-usa.com/About-ECHO/About-Us>