



PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE

The following is public correspondence received by the City Clerk's Office after the posting of the original agenda. Individual contact information has been redacted for privacy. This may *not* be a comprehensive collection of the public correspondence, but staff makes its best effort to include all correspondence received to date.

To send correspondence to the City Council, on matters listed on the agenda please email PublicComment@losaltosca.gov

From: [Sybil J. Cramer](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Enforce Gasoline Leaf Blower Ban
Date: Saturday, April 15, 2023 8:27:11 AM
Attachments: [deed-logo.png](#)

Dear Honorable Council Members,

Enforcing the Los Altos Ban on Gasoline Landscaping Equipment works!

Several years ago, I hired a landscaping company that already had electric landscaping equipment to care for our yard and garden. Ernesto Martinez gardenservice003@gamil.com.

In the hiring interview, I learned that Mr. Martinez switched to electric equipment after he had received 2 citations from the ordinance enforcement police officer - I believe he said that he paid 2 fines: \$125 and \$250.

Enforcement works! However, in your consideration of updating the Los Altos Ordinance (originally passed by the council in 1960) I would like to recommend the following:

- • Increase the fines to \$250, \$500, \$1,000 — (1960 rates need to be updated)

- • Incentivize a proactive code enforcement officer who patrols and issues citations for violations they see.

- NB The City of Palo Alto has already hired such a designated officer.

- • Fine the homeowner — After a first warning information sheet.

- This sheet should list the

- 1. detrimental effects of the emissions from gasoline leaf blowers —

- 2. the list of fines and the name of the enforcement officer —

- 3. a list of the locations for purchasing electric landscaping equipment and

the cost of various ones.

- 4. any discounts offered at local Los Altos Hardware for the purchase of equipment. and perhaps also ACE on E. Charleston in Mt. View and / or other sources.

Thank you for your time and interest in considering my message.

All best regards,

Sybil

291 Margarita Court

Los Altos 94022

Sybil Cramer

Volunteer Parent Liaison, LAHS Green Team

Co-Chair, LAHS PTSA Sustainability Committee

Chapter Secretary,

Silicon Valley Electric Auto Assoc.



From: [Sue Young](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: [External Sender]LA Leaf Blower ordinance
Date: Saturday, April 15, 2023 5:36:17 PM

Dear Los Altos City Council Members:

I will not be able to attend the April 25 City Council meeting due to a temporary medical limitation but wanted to write and express my opinion for updating the current Los Altos City ordinance regarding gas leaf blowers.

I would like to see the ordinance updated to:

- fine the homeowner, resident
- increase the current fines to \$250 for the first offense, \$500 for the second offense, and \$1000 for the third and subsequent offenses. These increased fines would be taken more seriously and help the city general fund.
- increase enforcement of the code by creating incentives as we currently see no priority on enforcement or significant data showing any enforcement.

By doing this, perhaps other cities will follow for an even more effective ordinance. Thank you for your attention on this matter. As you know the ban on gas leaf blowers was created to improve the health and environment so we need stronger enforcement.

Best regards,
Sue Young
(Los Altos Resident for 30 years)

From: [Rowena Dodson](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Consideration for leaf blower law changes
Date: Sunday, April 16, 2023 5:50:17 AM

Dear Council,

Thank you for your consideration of my comments. I live on Van Buren Street in Los Altos. Many of my neighbors' gardeners use gas leaf blowers, and often just when I want to enjoy my yard (Friday dinnertime, Saturday morning, both times when I like to relax on my patio). I have distributed fliers and sent emails regarding the law in Los Altos that prohibits using gas blowers. A couple of my neighbors responded positively and had their gardener start using electric blowers. However, the majority have continued with the status quo. At this point, if I were to call the city to report these violations, they would totally know that it was me and this would detrimentally affect our relations. Therefore, I feel there is no recourse.

My main concerns are for the environment, noise pollution and ultimately the health of the gardeners and we residents. The changes that we are urging for the city council would address these issues. Independent enforcement would remove the burden on neighbors to „report“ their friends for these violations. Fining the homeowner would put the onus on the person with the financial ability to help the gardener switch over and to inform themselves of the programs the city is offering to help gardeners switch. And increasing the fines would be likely to be more impactful to encourage positive change.

If we are going to make this law a reality rather than just words on paper, I strongly urge you to make the suggested changes to this law (see above) and to hire sufficient enforcement so that people take it seriously and start to comply.

Thank you very much,
Rowena Dodson
Los Altos, CA 94022

Sent from my iPad

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Thank you very much,
Rowena Dodson
Los Altos, CA 94022

Sent from my iPad

From: [Myra & Carl Orta](#)
To: [City Council](#); [Public Comment](#)
Subject: gas power leaf blowers
Date: Sunday, April 16, 2023 4:55:58 PM

Honorable Mayor and City Council,

It seems ludicrous that after 32 years of Los Altos having passed an ordinance banning gas power leaf blowers that we are still discussing this issue.

In 1991 Myra and Carl Orta were leaders in organizing this ban. It became a hot issue for those who want autonomy to do as they please in their own yard, against those residents who are concerned with the environment and the right to the enjoyment of peace and quiet in their own place. The issue was decided by the ballot box. The overwhelming majority voted to ban blowers. Our group acronym was BAN which stands for "Blowers Annoy Neighbors".

At that time, we had a very supportive Police Chief, Lucy Carlton. She organized a police blitz in different neighborhoods. The gardener paid a fine of \$100 if he was caught using the blower. It is ineffective and subsequent Police Chiefs have had varying attitudes towards the importance of this issue. Following our lead, Palo Alto passed a gas power leaf blower ban and currently has installed penalties of \$250, \$500, \$1,000 fines for 1st, 2nd, 3rd time violations, paid by the property owner.

I propose that Los Altos follow the lead of Palo Alto and install the same fines for violations to the property owners, also organize a blitz program where one neighborhood is checked by the police and fines are issued. The current state ruling that goes into effect in 2024 prohibits the sale of gas powered gardening equipment but it does not address the use and gardeners who already own this equipment can continue to use it, except in the towns where they have been banned, like Los Altos. Let's enforce our ban with real consequences.