



PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE

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

From: [Tom Shoup](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comment agenda item #6, May 9, 2023
Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 3:20:35 PM

I would like to add my comments regarding gasoline-powered leaf blowers and the lack of compliance enforcement.

My objection to leaf blowers is mostly due to the amount of dust they blow into the air. The website of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District identifies particulate matter, which includes dust, as the most hazardous air pollutant in the Bay Area in terms of the effect on health. [BAAQMD](#) also identifies residential wood burning as the largest source of particulate matter during the winter. I ask the council to prioritize reducing the contribution of dust and wood burning as sources of particulate matter within Los Altos.

With respect to compliance, I believe the homeowner should be cited for not complying with the existing regulations against the use of gas-powered leaf blowers. Yes, many times the gardener or lawn care person is using the blower, which s/he owns, but is violating the current regulation as an agent of the homeowner. As to the burden on the gardener to replace a gas-powered blower with an electric blower, the state Clean Off-Road Equipment Voucher Incentive Project (CORE) provides point-of-sale discounts for such equipment. This is listed on the California Air Resources Board website (search zero-emission landscape).

Enforcing compliance in the past has been a joke. Once a complaint is phoned to the non-emergency number and an officer dispatched to the site of the violation it is too late to observe the offense. On any given day a police officer can drive down just about any street and observe a gas-powered leaf blower in operation. Please step up enforcement by having all police officers, unless responding to an emergency, cite homeowners where a gas-powered leaf blower is in operation. I think a month or two of focused enforcement during spring and summer will get compliance moving in the right direction.

Submitted by,

Tom Shoup
112 Garland Way
Los Altos, CA

From: [Vicki Levy](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT - AGENDA ITEM 7 - Tuesday, May 09, 2023
Date: Monday, May 8, 2023 6:26:17 PM

Honorable City Council Members,

I am writing to add my voice in supporting an amendment to the Los Altos Municipal Code with regards to Gas Powered Leaf Blower Enforcement.

After thirty-two years of banning noisy leaf blowers in Los Altos, we still have no effective solution. Perhaps it is time to place the responsibility on the homeowner who hires the gardening service

rather than on the gardener who may not be aware of or care about the regulation. Since it is impractical for gardeners to own their own electric leaf blowers, one solution would be for each homeowner

to purchase an electric leaf blower and keep it in a designated spot for use by their own gardener. The battery life is more than sufficient for the gardening tasks of one residence.

Electric leaf blowers are reasonably priced and have lightweight, rechargeable batteries that are easily removed from the blower and taken inside where the homeowner can recharge it.

For some electric tool product lines, the same battery can be used for other electric tools such as lawn mowers, edgers, and trimmers. An electric leaf blower is as quiet as a hair dryer and does

not emit fumes.

We must find a solution to this problem. I am hopeful that with an informative, educational campaign our fellow residents of Los Altos will be open to making this small change knowing that it

will help lessen the environmental impact of pollution.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Vicki Levy

Los Altos resident for 37 years

From: [Dinesh Desai](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM 7 - 05/09/2023
Date: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 9:40:22 AM

I have heard that one revision under consideration is to impose fines on homeowners whose gardeners use gas-powered leaf blowers, instead of imposing fines on the gardeners using the gas-powered leaf blower. If this is true, I respectfully ask the council to consider my concern (see below).

I am not a lawyer, but I don't see how Los Altos can fine a homeowner. Many homeowners are not home when their gardeners come to their homes. They can tell the gardeners to use only electric blowers, but they have no control over what the gardeners actually use in their absence. I doubt such a law will stand up in a court.

Dinesh Desai
870 Highlands Circle
Los Altos

From: [Eric Muller](#)
To: [Public Comment](#)
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT AGENDA ITEM #7 - May 9, 2023 - Gas Powered Leaf Blower Enforcement
Date: Tuesday, May 9, 2023 10:17:47 AM

Dear Council,

Gasoline leaf blowers are clearly a nuisance, both for noise and pollution. Indeed, AB1346, signed into law, directs the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to ban the sale of new gasoline leaf blowers (and other gas powered lawn equipment) by Jan. 1, 2024.

I want to believe that Los Altos residents are supportive of electrification, or at least would be if properly informed; and that they will gladly help. I also recognize that this can be a financial burden for many of the gardeners who work in our city. In that spirit, I urge you to:

- significantly lower or even entirely waive the fee for Landscape & Gardening business licenses, at least for the next year or two, so that professional landscapers can easily benefit from the California CORE program, which covers 70% of the cost of new electric gardening equipment (see [californiacore dot org](#)).

- involve residents: when a violation is reported, send a letter to the resident with educational material on the benefits of gasoline lawn equipment, the CORE program (for professionals), and the SV Clean Energy rebate (for residents); at least in English and Spanish. I suggest to do that for the first two violations.

- on a third report, issue a fine to the resident (who could reassign it to their landlord, if appropriate). I would also support some mechanism to drop the fine if there is some evidence that the situation is addressed.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Council for switching the enforcement from the Police department to Development Services.

Thank you,
Eric Muller
752 Parma Way
Los Altos, CA 94024