

Steve Burns

Subject: FW: Gas Blowers

From: Alex Morcos <alexmorcos@hotmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, May 16, 2023 10:42 AM

To: Aimee Kellerman <akellerman@medina-wa.gov>

Cc: Steve Burns <Sburns@medina-wa.gov>; Steve Wilcox <swilcox@medina-wa.gov>; Ryan Osada <rosada@medina-wa.gov>

Subject: RE: Gas Blowers

Thank you Aimee. I registered at the Engage Medina site that you suggested.

As for my comments regarding gas powered leaf-blowers, please consider this as my input on the subject (which was also discussed numerous times when I was on council).

"Medina is a Sylvan City that puts a lot of emphasis on green spaces and protecting trees. As a result, it is a collection of mostly large properties with an expansive amount of grass, shrubs, green spaces, and trees. It is of high importance to most Medina residents that their properties are well-maintained, whether through mowing grass, pruning trees and bushes, or removing landscape debris resulting from trimming or just naturally falling leaves. Raking leaves manually is impractical and close to impossible in many large properties. Thus, the use of leaf-blowers is necessary. Banning leaf-blowers, like a very small number of cities have attempted to enforce around the country, is not reasonable or realistic. A compromise can be achieved that would satisfy most residents. Some gas-powered leaf-blowers are noisy and produce noxious gases. Yet many newer models are built with environmental considerations in mind. What I would propose is a collection of ideas that can make the city a more enjoyable place while still allowing residents to manage their lawns by themselves or with the help of landscape professionals.

1. Since leaf blowing mostly occurs AFTER landscapers or homeowners have trimmed and mowed their lawns, it is acceptable to restrict any leaf blowers not to be used earlier than 9 am. Other types of construction as well as lawn mowing and pruning can still happen after 7 am weekdays based on the current MMC. Just leaf blowers to be restricted to after 9 am.
2. Consider a code revision that regulates the decibel rating on leaf blowers not to exceed 70 dBA. There are gas-powered leaf blowers like the Echo PB-255LN at a noise rating of 64 dBA. A 70 dBA maximum is reasonable and results in the noise at a neighboring property to be in the 60 dBA range, not much louder than existing AC units and generators.
3. If item 2 (restricting the dBA rating) was to be applied, allow for a couple of years' notice to permit landscapers and homeowners to plan accordingly at replacing their existing machines.
4. Recommend but do not enforce only battery-powered leaf-blowers; current technology may not have the necessary blowing power when using a battery-operated leaf blower compared to gas models, not to mention the shorter lifetime due to battery charges. Battery-powered leaf blowers may be reasonable to use on small properties such as properties in the R16 zones, but remember that Medina includes R20 and R30 zones with properties larger than 20,000 SF and 30,000 SF respectively which makes a battery-powered leaf blower quite an inconvenience."

Thank you all for your good work at the city.

Alex Morcos

Steve Burns

From: Bruce Freed <bruce.freed@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 25, 2023 6:39 AM
To: Steve Burns
Subject: Re: blowers

Good morning Steve—thanks for the reply. Just in to be clear...chainsaws, weed eaters, mowers large and small, power hedgers, blowers, bobcats, small tractors, etc.... They all pollute via air and noise. The tool you choose to fit your narrative was the blower. So you convince the public that if we can eliminate the blower air and sound quality will improve. The only problem I see isthe problem..the blower....the answer is banning...so the desired result will follow. The desired result of clearer air....doesn't seem to have any documentation to support the case. You were unable to produce a single example of improved air quality to any city who has banned the gas power blower. Actually you have proved the blower is not the problem we thought it was otherwise the evidence would be obvious. I agree the electric blower is somewhat quieter but, not as effective. So really as far as banning a gas blower it is not really a game changer for any city unless the desired result was to "feel better" about the cause/narrative. Please remember I have no real opposition to electric cars and equipment but, I am also think if you are going to ask the greenest industry to make such a large change you should have solid reasons.

Speaking of offsets...can you think of an industry...gardening and landscape...which is the job of planting trees and shrubs not to mention the care of the greenery in the community. Interesting..... Thanks, Bruce Freed

Bruce Freed
bruce.freed@me.com

On Apr 24, 2023, at 3:33 PM, Steve Burns <Sburns@medina-wa.gov> wrote:

Bruce –

You asked a great question, and I cannot find any scientific studies that have compared pre-gas powered leaf blower bans versus post ban.

There are a lot of studies that identify gas-powered leaf blower hazards for noise and air pollution.

I will continue to search and if I find one, I will let you know.

Thanks, Steve

Stephen R. Burns
City Manager - City of Medina
501 Evergreen Point Road
Medina, WA 98039
Office (425) 233-6412
Cell (206) 510-7942
sburns@medina-wa.gov

<image001.png>

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From: Bruce Freed <bruce.freed@me.com>
Sent: Monday, April 24, 2023 8:28 AM
To: Steve Burns <Sburns@medina-wa.gov>
Subject: blowers

Is there any study that shows air pollution has vastly improved due to the banning of leaf blowers in that city for which they were banned??? After all I read it is low hanging fruit....so I assume there is plenty of documentation which influences the decision making. So for example the city of Del Mar is now experiencing much better air quality because they have banned leaf blowers. Thanks, Bruce Freed

Bruce Freed
bruce.freed@me.com

Steve Burns

From: Huan Bui <cardiper@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 10, 2023 7:16 PM
To: Steve Burns
Subject: swilcox@medina-wa.gov, rosada@medina-wa.gov

Dear Council Members,

I understand you are to discuss on banning gas-powered leaf blowers within the City of Medina to reduce air emissions and noise pollution. Base on those reasons, some may argue a ban on all ICE vehicles is more effective but is a much harder task. Also, the most effective ban of any products that deems harmful or unfriendly to the enviroment is to ban from its source.

It should have a grand father clause for those residents who had own one prior to this proposal as similar to others jurisdiction in the article attached.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Huan Bui



Gas leaf blowers and lawn mowers
are shockingly bad for the planet.
Bans are beginning to spread.
USA TODAY

Steve Burns

From: Allison Frey <awfrey@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, June 2, 2023 9:46 AM
To: Steve Burns
Subject: Fwd: Survey - Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers in Medina

Hi there. Just took this but am uncomfortable with the unintended consequences of asking maintenance and yard people, whose margins are already slim, to make capital investments to accommodate our community. Also, it's a bit of hypocrisy to ask external maintenance crews to give up the gas when our parks team is booping around on loud, gas powered atvs.

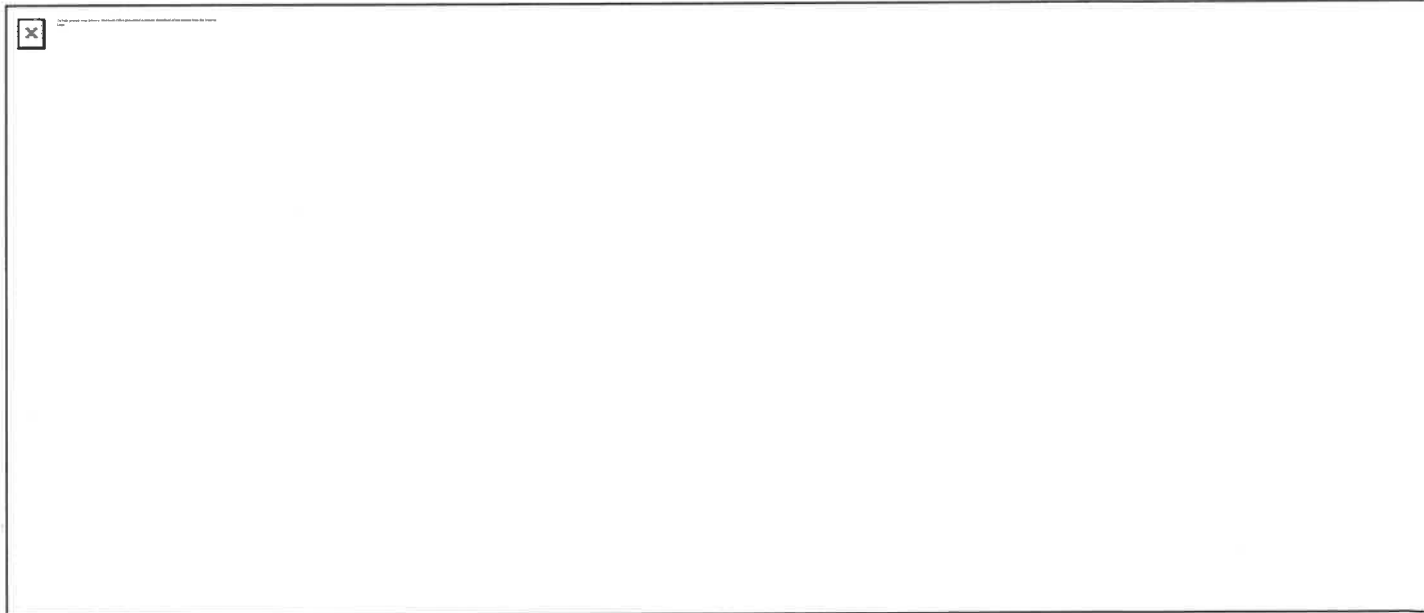
Is there an opportunity for a buy-back program thru the city where landscapers could trade in their gas blowers for cash or electric ones?

My two cents (that I couldn't put into the survey)

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Begin forwarded message:

From: City of Medina <wamedina@service.govdelivery.com>
Date: May 30, 2023 at 8:02:59 AM PDT
To: awfrey@yahoo.com
Subject: Survey - Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers in Medina
Reply-To: wamedina@service.govdelivery.com



Steve Burns

From: Doug Hutson <airbear1@mac.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 30, 2023 9:55 AM
To: Steve Burns
Subject: Gas blower survey

Good morning Steve,

I just took the gas powered blower survey and found that it was very minimal in allowing me to express my ideas on the subject. Can you explain what your role in this policy will be going forward? I intend to comm w/ the council as well, but wanted to touch base with you.

I am strongly opposed to a ban. I fully understand opposition to the blowers, I also wish I didn't have to hear them as often as I do in the forest I live in. However, by far the biggest maintenance issue I have at my residence is cleaning the CONSTANT debris that my trees drop onto my roof, gutters, and grounds. Gas powered blowers are the only thing that make it bearable. I don't believe that electric will prove adequate to the task.

Finally, I wish to point out the incongruence of the City's policy and tree code which severely restricts tree removal, but then would not allow homeowners the means to deal with their effects in a reasonable manner. It really seems to me that the City cannot have it both ways.

Much thanks,
Doug Hutson
101 Overlake Dr E

To Medina City Council Members:

A Public Comments on Leaf Blower Regulation:

The leaf blower survey was missing several critical questions. If the City really wanted resident's input on blower regulations, the survey should have asked, do you support the city's efforts to ban leaf blowers? Then list the alternatives and ask residents to show their preferences. Based on the rather random questions on the survey, it appears that the survey purpose is simply so that the City could "say" it sent out a survey that informed their regulations.

The city webpage on Leaf Blower regulation does not have information about the environmental impact of electric blowers, how much noise electric blowers make and the *cumulative* noise impacts of electric blowers since they take longer to do the job. It also lacks information on the impact of gas powered leaf blower regulation on the cost to yard service companies, the decrease of yard service company availability in cities that have banned leaf blowers and the increase in price for yard services in cities that enacted bans. The City and council members have an obligation to understand all the consequences before making a decision.

The City's webpage on leaf blowers lacks information on what their phased approach to banning is. That information should be clearly available so that residents can comment on it and it should have been included in the survey.

I would encourage the City Council members to understand all the consequences of a gas powered leaf blower ban. In order to stay in business, smaller yard service companies and family run companies will likely take their services elsewhere where they can complete enough jobs per day to stay in business and not increase their overhead by having to purchase multiple electric blowers to get them through the day (batteries don't last all day). This will increase the cost of yard service, which for some is not an issue but is a problem for the fixed income crowd living. Blower noise may end up being more extensive as it just takes longer to do a job with an electric blower. I do wonder if the City feels strong enough about banning gas powered blowers because of their noise and environmental impact, why wouldn't you also ban gas powered boats, power washers, lawn mowers, chain saws, hedge trimmers and edgers? Or does the City just want to ban gas powered leaf blowers for the optics?

Of course the city should work to encourage companies and individuals to voluntarily move to equipment that is less impactful to the environment as the technology improves and becomes available. No argument there. Through education, publications, the press's focus on climate impacts and better electric technology, the industry already is and will naturally migrate to cleaner tools. In the meantime, appropriate regulations on hours of use helps limit the noise. In addition, any individual resident could purchase an electric blower for themselves and for the landscapers that work at their home. This allows those that have the means and desire to start the migration to do so, while allowing those without the means to do it later as they naturally need to replace equipment. Forcing the issue through city regulation is not necessary.

Unfortunately because of the likelihood of being "cancelled" by a few of the more vocal residents in our community, I am not comfortable signing my name. I wonder how many others feel the same way!

Sincerely,

A Medina Resident

Steve Burns

From: Stephie Borgförd <borgfords@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 25, 2023 5:14 PM
To: Steve Burns
Subject: Gas powered leaf blowers

Dear City Manager Burns,

My name is Stephenie Borgford and I live at 7841 NE Tenth St here in Medina. I have lived here since 1975 and my parents, Richard and Sheryl lived here since the early 70s when my grandfather purchased this property at an estate auction.

In your introduction on Medina's page you write "I want to welcome you to the City of Medina – a tremendous place to live, play, and work." Unfortunately, this statement reflects the Medina I knew ten some years ago but is not reflective of today. One of the main reasons I state this is that gas powered blowers have made for an absolute miserable existence here in Medina ruining the special feel of this city.. From dawn to dusk, there is hardly a quiet moment here as there is always the LOUD noise from gas powered blowers. They make living in this beautiful area hell honestly.

For the past two years I have been mainly residing in Eastern Europe and I can safely say that even in giant dirty polluted cities like Bucharest in the center, it is quieter than Medina. In the past two years I have stayed at literally hundreds of different places, from small houses on islands in Croatia to hotels in wartime Kyiv and in some of Eastern Europe's biggest cities and I can safely say none of those places have had the absolute horribly intrusive noise of these gas powered blowers.

I have written the council quite often. I have made my view known. In fact, this is honestly one main reason I chose to live elsewhere for the majority of the year. The noise is so bad, it's not worth staying here for a long period of time. I find this sad as my property used to be peaceful.

Big cities like Vancouver BC, Washington DC and the entire state of California have all banned these. I fail to understand why Medina cannot act. The time for talking and input is over!! At what point does this start to affect home values? Who wants to purchase a 4 million dollar home only to hear blowers all day???? I would be disappointed if I were a buyer.

This situation is unbearable, unacceptable and cannot continue. It will only get worse. Action is needed. Words won't make this area more peaceful.

I am looking forward to returning to Bucharest and Chişinău, Republic of Moldova where I can enjoy tranquility!!! Who would imagine a person would say Romania and Moldova are more peaceful but they are.

I hope someday the city will act responsibly and put an end to this nightmare. Thank you for your attention. Sincerely,

Stephenie A. Borgford

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Stephenie Borgford