

Your Yard

Potential Blower Bans Creating a Lot of Noise

(NAPSA)—When it comes to maintaining the nation's 30 million acres of lawns, experts say the gas-powered blower is king of the equipment arsenal for professional landscapers and conscientious homeowners alike. However, in over 250 cities across the country from New York to L.A., the topic of gas-powered leaf blower bans is creating a lot of noise.

The alternatives to gas-powered blowers include lower-power electric blowers, manual raking or using water to move debris. However, experts warn these alternatives may create a new set of societal and environmental issues including depletion of natural resources like water and electricity if we have to find other ways to move leaves and debris.

Municipal departments like public works and parks and recreation could face significant increases in manpower needed to complete jobs if forced to use less powerful alternatives, leaving taxpayers to foot the bill.

Lawn care professionals like Charles Gonzalez of Tropics North in Homestead, FL also fear the bans will have a huge economic impact on their businesses. "If my crews are forced to rake or sweep instead of using blowers, that could decrease our productivity up to 75 percent," said Gonzalez. "My business can't afford to take that hit, so the cost would be passed along to our customers."

James McNew, vice president of technical and marketing services for the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute said, "Over the last decade, manufacturers have invested millions of dollars in developing cleaner and quieter leaf blowers."



One manufacturer has introduced a new blower with a noise rating of only 64 dBA, comparable to the average human conversational tone of voice. Husqvarna has introduced the 356BT backpack blower so quiet that users can carry on a normal conversation while using it without sacrificing power. "A new high-powered engine was developed creating more torque at lower RPMs. By enclosing this engine in an acoustically designed housing, the sound pressure was significantly reduced," explains Kevin Bealieu, vice president of product management for Husqvarna. "The result is a backpack blower that is eight times quieter than other traditional blowers on the market."

Experts say unless lawn care professionals and homeowners begin using the latest, less noisy equipment solutions, the right to bear blowers could be lost.

Additional information on Husqvarna's quiet blower is available at www.husqvarna.com or locate a dealer near you by calling 1-800-HUSKY 62.