

IMPACTS OF GAS-POWERED LEAF BLOWERS

SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING NOTES

20 April 2022

3 p.m.

Virtual Meeting

Attendees

1. Co-Chair Phil Kiraly
2. Scott Grams
3. King Poor
4. Joe Scopelliti
5. Tony Blumberg
6. Heather Ross
7. Karen Glennemeier
8. Sam Barghi

Reports of Subcommittees

- Review Penalties and Violations from various municipalities
 - *Ms. Glennemeier and Mr. Poor*
 - Compiled a report of surrounding communities' current policies or legislation. These communities will be contacted for additional feedback.
 - Mr. Kiraly asked if there is any value of surveying any communities from the west and east coast to determine whether any important insight may be gained.
 - Ms. Ross asked if we can determine how long these local bans have been in place. If they are more recent policies, reaching out to communities with more mature policies could prove beneficial.
 - Mr. Grams recommended surveying communities that have representative tree canopies and climates.
 - Quiet communities in the Boston area may be a helpful resource for the Northeast.
- Review best-practices/feedback on hours and days/times of the year, and noise pollution
 - *Mr. Kiraly, Mr. Grams, and Mr. Nehila*
 - Presentation at the last full working group meeting was helpful to think about the fall months in particular and how we might have to make some exceptions for those heavy leaf-fall months. Information will be gathered to that effect.
 - Mr. Grams will be pulling together commercial grade leaf blower specs (gas and battery powered) to serve as a comparison point for noise emissions and create a comparison chart. Some items that will be covered including decibel levels, max air speed, max charge time, cost, unit cost, battery costs, and how many additional batteries per service day. Mr. Grams noted there are operator time-restriction concerns from OSHA for anything over 80 decibels, even if hearing protection is utilized.
 - Mr. Poor asked if there is any emissions information included in the spec sheets for the gas-powered blowers. Mr. Grams will review to determine if that information is available.
- Review Leaf Blower Specs and Information
 - *Mr. Scopelliti, Mr. Blumberg, Ms. Ross, and Mr. Barghi*
 - The group contacted the EPA, American Lung Association, and the Chicago Area Clean Cities to begin collecting any related environmental and health impact data. The goal is to review the data and provide a summary report by the next meeting.

- General conversations
 - There will be a public re-education campaign component as part of this whole initiative, similar to curbside recycling, where there will be a discussion of the public's expectations of service levels, the difficulty/ease of implementing these alternatives, etc.
 - This group and each participating community will need to determine about whether this initiative is about noise, or noise and emissions, as there will be trade-offs with each outcome. If emissions are a concern, a buy-back program, or other equity-raising options, may be worth exploring.

Next Steps

- Continue gathering data and meeting with your respective groups, and report back by the next meeting date.

Next Meeting

- The next sub-committee virtual meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 25, 2022, at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sam Barghi
Public Works Management Analyst, Village of Lincolnshire