

## Dear Culver City Council Members:

Leafblowers pose a very serious health problem to our city. Those of us with allergies, asthma, and other respiratory illnesses find our health problems significantly exacerbated by the noxious pollution created by leaf blowers. Children and the elderly are especially vulnerable and susceptible to toxic leaf blower pollution, and now, 15% of children over the age of four in Los Angeles County have asthma \*.

Just as importantly, the obnoxiously loud noises generated by numerous leaf blowers blasting throughout the day creates tremendous stress nearly every day of the week. The EPA states that: "Studies have shown that there are direct links between noise and health"\*\*. The body reacts to this stress with increased adrenaline, changes in the heart rate, and elevated blood pressure. This contributes to hypertension, ischemic heart disease, ADD and ADHD, and serious psychological agitation. Hearing damage is another important associated risk.

## Leaf blowers create four major sources of health pollution:\*\*\*

**Exhaust Pollution**-hydrocarbons (many being carcinogenic), ozone, carbon monoxide, nitrous oxides, formaldehyde, benzene, and many others

**Particulate Pollution**-harmful chemicals, pesticides, fertilizers, dust, insect eggs, spores, molds, fecal and urinary matter from rodents, dogs and cats, and allergic fungi

**Quantity Pollution**- Per the California Air Resources Board, an individual gas powered leaf blower emits 500 times the level of hydrocarbons of a modern automobile.

**Noise Pollution**- The mind-numbing, high-pitched roar of a typical gas powered two-stroke leaf blower is 90-102 decibels. This creates tremendous psychological and physical stress.

---The World Health Organization recommends noise levels of 55 decibels or less;

---The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has found that noise levels over 75 decibels can cause hearing loss and are harmful to human health.

Please see this 5 minute video about leaf blower pollution from the Studio City Neighborhood Council:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsJPXV3PecE&feature=player\\_embedded#](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsJPXV3PecE&feature=player_embedded#)

## Leaf Blower Propaganda:

The idea that leaf blowers save time-which is the one and only argument for using them-is outrageous, since it implies that the time the rest of us spend in poor health, pain, and suffering from these machines is worthless. Furthermore, as you will read below, there is no evidence of

financial hardship to gardeners where leaf blowers have been banned. Plus, gardeners always have the option of using the efficient manual leaf sweeping machines already on the market.

"It has been argued by leaf blower operators that the use of rakes and brooms would cause cleanup jobs to take up to twice as long to complete. There is no evidence of increase in the cost of lawn care when blowers are banned. In none of the cities that have already banned blowers is there any evidence of resulting tax increases, or of financial hardship to gardeners. The city of Laguna Beach has banned all types of blowers since 1993 and enjoys 95% compliance. The city uses brooms and rakes to maintain city parks with no impact on costs or cleanliness. The city of Claremont, which banned blowers in 1990, has discovered that their grounds crews are actually saving an hour a day per crew using sidewalk vacuums instead of leaf blowers." \*\*\*\*

### **The Orange County Grand Jury also concluded that:**

"In light of the evidence, the Grand Jury determined the health hazards citizens are exposed to by the use of leaf blowers outweigh the questionable economic benefit blowers may bring to the cities and the County. The Grand Jury recommends that the cities, school districts, community college districts, and the County cease using gas powered blowers in their maintenance and cleanup operations." \*\*\*\*\*

**Please see the Grand Jury Report:**

<http://www.ocgrandjury.org/pdfs/leafblow.pdf>

Leaf Blower proponents are always threatening to raise prices if they are banned. But according to the current **City of Santa Monica website page on Leaf Blower Facts:**

### **"Bans do NOT have detrimental fiscal consequences**

In none of the cities which have already banned blowers is there any evidence of resulting tax increases, or of financial hardship to gardeners. The standard refrain from gardeners is that they would have to increase their rates if they couldn't use their blowers. Yet there's no evidence of that happening in L.A. or any other cities that have banned blowers."

**Please see the Santa Monica Leaf Blower Fact Sheet:**

[https://www.smgov.net/Departments/OSE/Categories/Landscape/Leaf\\_Blower\\_Facts.aspx](https://www.smgov.net/Departments/OSE/Categories/Landscape/Leaf_Blower_Facts.aspx)

### **Footnotes:**

\*Source- California Health Interview Survey (CHIS), 2014

\*\*Source- United States Environmental Protection Agency website, Dec., 2016

\*\*\*Source- Orange County Grand Jury Report, Dec., 2012

\*\*\*\*Source- City of Albany City Council Report, Nov. 20, 2013

\*\*\*\*\*Source- Orange County Grand Jury Report, Dec., 2012

\*\*\*\*\*Source- Russell Ackerman, Sustainability Specialist, Santa Monica Office of Sustainability

## **OUR RECOMMENDATION:**

A total ban on all leaf blowers, such as the City of Santa Monica has done since the early 90's, would remedy all four health hazards of leaf blower pollution: Exhaust Pollution, Particulate Pollution, Quantity Pollution, and Noise Pollution.

This ban includes electric leaf blowers, many of which are as noisy as the gas blowers, and all of which still spew Particulate Pollution into our air.

Alternatives to motorized leaf blowers include push brooms of all sizes, rakes, and a variety of manual leaf and lawn sweeping machines that are available on the market, such as the Haaga brand (<http://www.haagaindustrialsweeper.com/haaga-477.html>), “which works great on hardscape”. “It turns out that lawn sweepers and hardscape sweepers are just as fast as blowers, because gardeners don’t have to pick up the leaves—the sweeper does that”\*\*\*\*\*

The City of Santa Monica discovered that two factors were essential to an effective ban on leaf blowers: 1) An effective education program for gardeners and residents, and 2) An effective enforcement program, where gardeners are ticketed and fined on the spot, between \$250 and \$1000.

This current enforcement program was developed in response to thousands of complaints from Santa Monica residents that the ban was not otherwise effective.

A similar ticketing enforcement program in Culver City could also become a source of funding for the education program on the leaf blower ban or a new revenue source for essential Culver City projects and programs.

City Council Members, we greatly appreciate your time and your consideration of our recommendation, to rectify the considerable health risks and the reduced quality of life that leaf blowers impose on our community.

**CULVER CITY RESIDENTS IN SUPPORT OF THIS  
LEAF BLOWER BAN:**

**FROM 6124 Buckingham Parkway --**

Robert Hirschhorn, unit 304

Bill Kardaras, unit 302

Tara Haight, unit 302

Megan Koehler, unit 309

Ken Lee, unit 305

Randy Kamzan, unit 207

Adam Calderas, unit 101

Harriet Pope, unit 202

Kevin Harmeyer, unit 405

Tracy Cluss, unit 405

Marcia Doyle, unit 308

Rob Evans, unit 307

Charlie Rebor, unit 204

Christian Capril, unit 208

Ken Niyama, unit 205

Dawn Garcia, unit 101

Valerie Kennedy, unit 301

Stephano Mozher, unit 301

Mark Brenner, unit 407

## Chin, Helen

---

**From:** Sahli-Wells, Meghan  
**Sent:** Monday, April 17, 2017 9:36 AM  
**To:** Chin, Helen  
**Subject:** FW: to ban leaf blowers

---

**From:** "randij2@aol.com" <randij2@aol.com>  
**Date:** Saturday, April 15, 2017 at 7:16 AM  
**To:** "Sahli-Wells, Meghan" <Meghan.Sahli-Wells@culvercity.org>  
**Subject:** to ban leaf blowers

Good Morning, I am a resident of culver city and I am encouraging for you to ban all leaf blowers in culver city for health reasons. Thank you for your concern

4/15/2017

Good Day,

My wife and I am are local Culver City resident of 18 years. We am writing to you to our express our support of the petition currently before you to effectively ban leaf blowers in Culver City.

This issue on the surface of blower use may not seem to rise to the level of heavy toxic metals, but it should. There is ample evidence that using these tools spews any number of toxins and allergens into the air. To watch someone use the machines while blowing nothing but dirt, dust and allergens off sidewalks is beyond frustrating for anyone who wants to breathe clean air, but especially so for anyone dealing with allergies. And the reason operators wear ear protection? They're hideously loud and merely contribute to an already high level of noise pollution in the city.

I myself have contracted allergies in the last 10 years, around 47yr. And I feel the effects of exposure to the blowing, and circulating of the contaminated elements daily.

On a more vein note, if I get my car washed on any day, it's soon covered with blower debris, leaving us to use more resources with frequent cars baths.

I would hope that if a ban is not considered, a firm schedule (two days a week) could be imposed and enforced.

In a nut shell the use of these blowers are a nuisance and unhealthy for us, for you and all of our families. Please help protect us all.

With sincere appreciation,

William & Tara Kardaras  
Billkardaras@msn.com  
310-216-1499

## Chin, Helen

---

**From:** Herbertson, Charles  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 19, 2017 11:19 AM  
**To:** Chin, Helen; Susca, Joe; Reynolds, Patrick  
**Subject:** FW: Sustainability / Leafblowers

FYI. Helen, make sure this letter is part of the record.

Thank you,

Charles



CHARLES D. HERBERTSON, P.E. & L.S.  
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS & CITY ENGINEER

☎ (310) 253-5630 📠 (310) 253-5626  
✉ [CHARLES.HERBERTSON@CULVERCITY.ORG](mailto:CHARLES.HERBERTSON@CULVERCITY.ORG)

---

**From:** Darrel Menthe [mailto:dmenthe@sagelawpartners.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 19, 2017 11:09 AM  
**To:** Herbertson, Charles <charles.herbertson@culvercity.org>; Sahli-Wells, Meghan <Meghan.Sahli-Wells@culvercity.org>; Eriksson, Goran <Goran.Eriksson@culvercity.org>  
**Cc:** Sylvia (sylvia@downtownculvercity.com) <sylvia@downtownculvercity.com>  
**Subject:** Sustainability / Leafblowers

Dear Sustainability Committee:

The Culver City Downtown Business Association has recently been informed that the committee may be considering recommending a total ban on all leafblowers of every type at all times. Leafblowers have been important tools for maintaining the look and feel of the downtown area, and likely other business districts in the city. Chrysalis, which handles maintenance for the DBA, uses a leafblower once a week as part of its regular maintenance. Other businesses in the downtown area, including the Kirk Douglas Theater, also have gardeners who use leafblowers.

If there are legitimate concerns about noise and dust, the DBA would be supportive of reasonable regulations concerning the type of leafblower, and time, place, manner, and frequency of use of leafblowers to address those concerns, but we would prefer to avoid a complete ban.

Darrel Menthe  
President, DBA

Darrel C. Menthe





9696 Culver Boulevard | Ste. 301 | Culver City, CA 90232 | Direct: 310.601.1200

Main: 310.388.4870 | Fax: 310.601.1200 | [dmenthe@sagelawpartners.com](mailto:dmenthe@sagelawpartners.com) | [www.sagelawpartners.com](http://www.sagelawpartners.com)