

7

2003 NOV 14 A 10:35

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Fabian Drixler
71 Prentiss St
Cambridge MA 02140
Tel: 617 497 1113

November 8, 2003

Cambridge City Council
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear City Council,

I am writing to petition for a ban on the use of leaf blowers in Cambridge.

<http://www.cambridgema.gov> states that

“while Cambridge is one of the most densely populated cities in the U.S., it attempts through its comprehensive noise ordinance to minimize the impact of noise on the quality of life in its neighborhoods and business districts.”

In this context, it is puzzling that Cambridge still allows the use of leaf blowers between 7a.m. - 10 p.m. The advantages that leaf blowers confer on their users are in no proportion to the burdens of noise and air pollution they impose on everybody else.

Leaf blowers are advertised as a labor-saving device. Even if we accept this claim uncritically, these machines increase the labor productivity of leaf-blowing by reducing the labor-productivity of all activities that depend on a modicum of quiet and peace, such as learning, teaching, research, and the many-types of home work that flourish in our community. Leaf blowers also affect adversely the professional lives of people who work night shifts and need to sleep during the day.

Beyond the disruption to work and study, leaf blowers seriously compromise the general quality of life in Cambridge and especially the possibility of recreation both outdoors and indoors.

According to the Noise Pollution Clearinghouse, gasoline-powered leaf blowers:

- create up to 70 decibels of noise from fifty feet, and 109 decibels at “ground zero”.
- generate as much tailpipe emissions as an automobile traveling 100 miles per hour.
- carry away topsoil and spread fecal contaminants, herbicides and pesticides by making them airborne with their muzzle velocity of 150 miles per hour. This is especially serious for asthmatics or people with other breathing difficulties and for those with allergies.

7

A ban on leaf blowers would also protect employees of lawn services and janitorial staff, who may have no choice in deciding whether to use a rake or a blower, which damages their, and everybody else's, health.

According to the Noise Pollution Clearinghouse, three hundred cities nationwide have banned leaf blowers. It is time that Cambridge joins this group of enlightened communities.

I would be happy to present a personal petition at a meeting of the City Council.

I look forward to learning of your decision,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fabian Drixler', written in a cursive style.

Fabian Drixler

3748

Communication #7

A communication was received from Fabian Drixler, regarding a petition for a ban on the use of leaf blowers in Cambridge.

In City Council November 24, 2003

PLACED ON FILE