



Sustainable Gardening Practices—and the Leaf Blower Education Campaign Continues with Flyers to be Delivered Door to Door

As mentioned in last month's Town Journal, gas powered leaf blowers will be banned in our Town starting on September 1, 2022, joining other municipalities in Montgomery County as well as Washington, DC. In support of the Town Council's decision, the Environment Committee will continue its education campaign so neighbors understand the risks of gas-powered leaf blowers (i.e., noise, pollution, and health risks), as well as share information about more sustainable gardening practices. Toward that goal, in the coming months Environment Committee members will be going door to door with two flyers (English and Spanish) for you to read and share with your landscaper. We hope you find these flyers informative and helpful during this transition period.

- Use the blower only to clean drains and rake hard surfaces. Using the blower less makes my property less "perfect", but blowing plant beds and grass regularly will destroy the health of the soil as well as the habitat for all sorts of nature's creatures. Leaves should never be blown from the grass, they should ALWAYS be mowed with the grass.
- Don't water the grass. Our weather system (at present) is plenty sufficient to support the healthy growth of grass.

WORKING WITH THE LEAVES IN AUTUMN

After waiting for all the leaves to fall, I have my landscaper come only once in mid-December with rakes, tarps, mower, and electric and battery powered blowers to move the leaves. I also engage in the following practices:

- Use an electric blower to remove leaves from my roof and gutters.
- Let the leaves in my plant beds naturally turn to mulch.
- Rake and blow leaves off hard surfaces and drains to the grass where my landscaper mows the leaves and grass approximately three times, thus creating free mulch! (FYI, I have a very large white oak, which produces a LOT of leaves, but I still manage the volume without difficulty.)
- Pay my landscaper slightly more for his services, now that the already illegal (i.e., over 70 decibels) gas-powered leaf blowers will soon not be allowed in our Town.



Some General Gardening Practices that Work for Me!

On a personal front, I have changed the way I care for my property by using more sustainable gardening practices:

DURING THE WARM MONTHS

- Cut the grass every two weeks so that mowing occurs half as much (less pollution), and thus the grass becomes slightly taller and actually healthier. Short grass is typically more stressed.

We realize that each property has its own challenges, so we understand that everyone must decide how to care for their property in as sustainable and feasible way as possible.

The Environment Committee wishes you a Happy Holiday Season! Please reach out to us with questions at: **tos.environmentcommittee@gmail.com**.