



Gas Powered Leaf Blowers (GPLBs)

Red Bank Environmental Commission Presentation to Red Bank Council - October 10, 2024



RED BANK
Environmental Commission



Presentation Overview



- I. Presentation Goals
 - a. Raise Awareness
 - b. Build Support for Sustainable Landscaping
- II. Introduction to Project Team
- III. GPLB Issues
- IV. Gov't & Non-Profit Responses
- V. RBEC's Approach
- VI. Q&A

Introduction

GPLB Project Team:

- ❖ Paulo Rodriguez Heyman, RBEC Chair
- ❖ Denelle Godek-Johnson, RBEC Vice-Chair
- ❖ Dave Johnson, RBEC
- ❖ Pam McArthur, Red Bank Green Team
- ❖ Stephanie Bricken, Red Bank Citizen
- ❖ Lois Kraus, Co-Founder of Advocates Transforming Landscaping in New Jersey (ATL-NJ); Westfield Green Team

2-Stroke Engines



- GPLB
- String trimmer
- Chainsaw
- Soil tiller
- Hedge trimmer
- ✓ NOT lawnmowers!

GPLB Issues: Air Quality

POLLUTION
FROM
1
HOUR



=



POLLUTION
FROM
1,100
CAR MILES

Toxic Fumes:

- ❑ *30% of fuel not combusted!*
- Carcinogens: Benzene; Formaldehyde; 1,3-butadiene
- Smog/Asthma: Particulates
- Climate Change: CO₂ and Methane
- Smog/Ozone: Nitrogen Oxides and VOCs



GPLB Issues

IF THAT ENGINE WERE ON THE ROAD
IT'S SO POLLUTING
IT WOULD BE BANNED



INSTEAD HE WEARS IT
ON HIS BACK FOR 8 HOURS A DAY

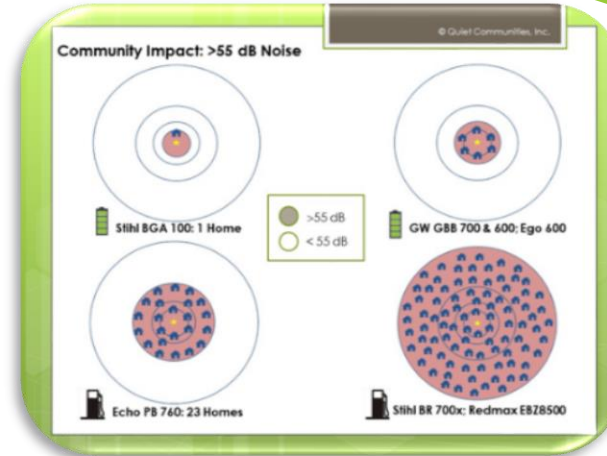
Environmental Justice

- Health Risks to Workers
 - Asthma, Cancer, Heart Disease, Dementia
 - Hearing Loss
 - ✓ 90-110 decibels (>85db causes permanent hearing loss); low frequency penetrates walls
 - ✓ Permanent hearing loss
 - ✓ Anxiety and depression
 - ✓ Hypertension (i.e. high blood pressure)
 - ✓ Cognitive impairment in children

GPLB Issues

Quality of Life Issue

- Noise Pollution



Impacts to Wildlife

- 150-280 mph = Habitat disruption (bees, butterflies, moths, small mammals)
- Soil
- Organic matter



Responses

Municipalities

❖ Partial Bans

- Princeton, Morristown, Leonia, and South Orange
- 3 NJ Towns pending for 2025
- 100 municipalities nationwide
- GPLB Reduction Schedule
 - PROHIBITED – Winter/Summer
 - ALLOWED – Spring/Fall

❖ Full-Year Bans

- Maplewood (following 6 years of outreach and education)
- Montclair
- State of California



Sample Schedule

ALLOWABLE DAYS AND HOURS OF USE OF LANDSCAPING EQUIPMENT

[illegible]

Responses

- **State of New Jersey**


- S217/A4666 – gas-powered lawn equipment sale and use prohibition, w/ tax credits for replacement.
- A2319 – BPU to establish rebates for battery-powered LBs

- **Local Non-Profit Partners**

- ATL-NJ
- Sustainable Jersey – Created Actions
- ANJEC – Outreach
- American Green Zone Alliance (AGZA)
- New Jersey Nursery & Landscape Association (NJNLA)




RBEC Approach


BOROUGH OF RED BANK
WWW.REDBANKNJ.ORG

Gas Powered Leaf Blowers
 Reduce the Use Awareness
 Quiet Zone Considerations

Sustainable Alternatives

- Utilize electric or battery blower
- Engage with your landscaper
- Broom or rake yard waste
- Use a mulching mower
- Mower with collecting bin
- Convert to native plants



Health Hazards & Climate Impact
 Gas-powered leaf blowers, especially those with two-stroke engines, emit large amounts of air pollution including: fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These are linked to health problems, asthma attacks, reproductive issues, mental health challenges, cancer, and even premature death.

 Gas-powered leaf blowers are a significant source of carbon dioxide, which contributes to global climate change. According to the EPA, using a gas-powered blower for one hour emits as much pollution as driving 1,100 miles in a car.


GPLB Statistics

Emissions from Lawn & Garden Equipment: 2028	Tons of Emissions	Equivalent to: Number of Cars
Nitrogen Oxides (NO _x)	2,303	1,332,937
Carbon Dioxide (CO ₂)	119,142	1,353,520
PM _{2.5} , Primary	965	253,004

Noise Pollution
 Gas-powered leaf blowers emit up to 90 decibels of noise. The noise from gas-powered leaf blowers is linked to hearing loss, increased agitation, and cardio vascular issues. Noise, fumes, and dust particles infringe on outdoor activities. Learning and concentration are also affected.

Gas-Powered Leaf Blower Summary
 The use of gas-powered leaf blowers comes with high costs for our health, environment, and enjoyment of the benefits of living in Red Bank. Two-stroke engines have been phased out of nearly all industries with the exception of lawn equipment and, unlike cars, their emissions are not regulated. They not only spew toxic chemicals and planet-warming emissions into the air, but their noise causes hearing loss, stress, and disrupts natural habitats.

 Help Quiet Red Bank promotes a healthier, more livable community for residents and lawn care workers alike.


 Designed for Red Bank Environmental Commission by FlintFaceStudies.com

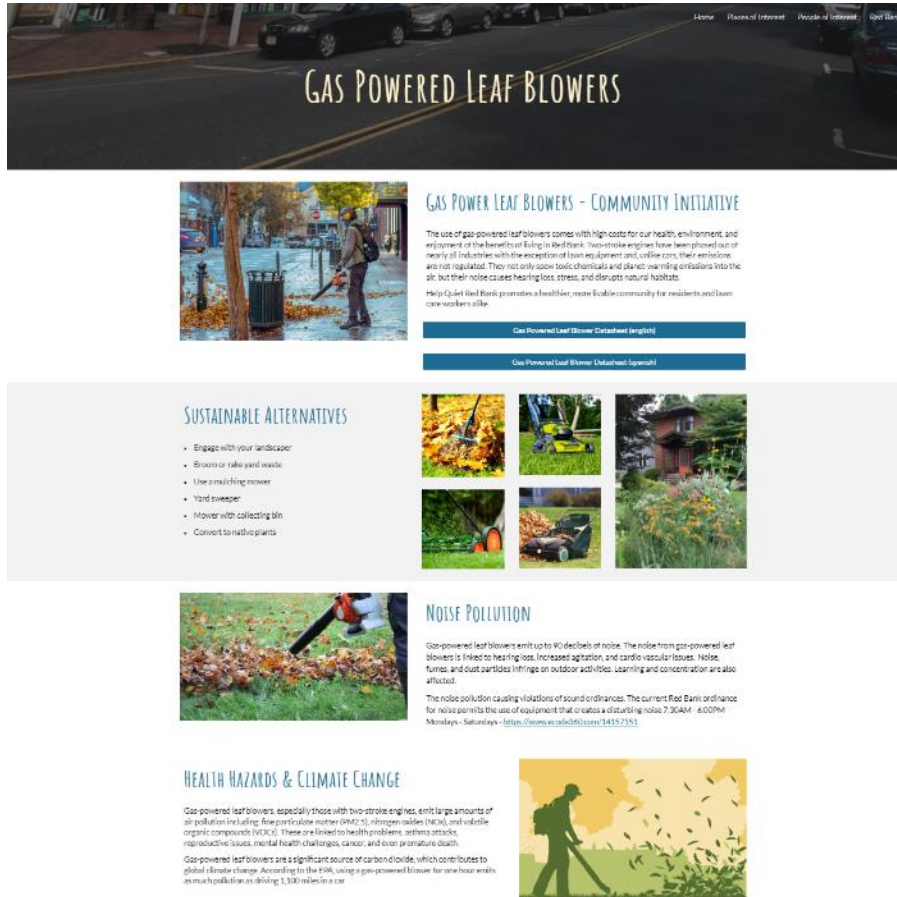
➤ Sustainable Landscape Practices:

- ✓ Encourage GPLB Reduction
- ✓ “Leave the leaves”
- ✓ “No Mow May”
- ✓ Native Plants

➤ Battery-Powered Alternatives

➤ Flyer Distribution

RBEC Approach



✓ RBEC Website & Social Media

✓ DPU Meeting

✓ Council Presentation

✓ Community Outreach (incl. Landscapers)

<https://www.redbank.site/environmental/leaf-blowers>



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Q&A

Thank you!