

**Request for Consideration by the City of Manhattan Beach**

**Submitted by the MVHOA and MVEHA Boards**

Date: January 22, 2019

TO: Members of the Manhattan Beach Sustainability Task Force

FROM: Representatives of the MVHOA and MVEHA Boards of Directors  
Diane Wallace, Secretary, MVHOA Board  
Scott King, President, MVHOA Board  
Ralph Smaldino, Treasurer, MVEHA

Subject: 1. Request for an exemption from the current ordinance to allow the HOAs to use no emission blowers.

2. Subsequently, consider re-writing the ordinance to allow no emission landscape equipment, including blowers, hedgers, weed wackers, etc.

This request is submitted on behalf of the owners of 522 homes in our HOAs, with an estimated 1200 residents.

Initially, this packet presents the MB City Blower ordinance, which was originally approved 21 years ago, and totally bans the use of blowers throughout the City. However, in the past decades improvements have been made and no emission landscape equipment is now no emission.

Following the ordinance, we present an introduction to our HOAs and the landscaping issues we face in our HOAs.

Then we present current recommendations for blowers and other landscape equipment

### **City Ordinance 5.48.330**

**5.48.330 - Mechanical blowers.**

A. Defined. Whenever used in this Code, the words "mechanical blower" shall refer to a portable device which is used, designed or operated to produce a current of air by mechanical, electrical or other means to push, propel or blow dirt, dust, leaves, grass clippings, trimmings, cuttings, refuse or debris.

B. Prohibited. Use of mechanical blowers for any purpose shall be prohibited.

C. Enforcement. Violation of this section shall be punishable as described in Chapter 1.04 of this Code.

(§ 6, Ord. 1957, eff. December 5, 1996, as amended by § 2, Ord. 1986, eff. October 15, 1998, and § 1, Ord. 2153, eff. October 20, 2011)

**Notes:**

This ordinance was written at a time in which only gas blowers were available. There were serious and valid concerns about the noise and pollution generated by the gas blowers. The City of Redondo Beach recently banned gas blowers.

The ordinance only addresses blowers and ignores a myriad of other landscape equipment which continue to be run on gas. And they pollute and generate excessive noise. It might be appropriate to consider a new ordinance that would address all landscape equipment.

In our investigation of this issue, we have discovered that several large commercial properties in Manhattan Beach use gas blowers and some properties regularly use hoses and water to clean their hardscape. They are not using powerwashing equipment.

## **An Introduction and Overview of MVHOA and MVEHA**

Our property by the numbers:

Size: 49 acres (MVHOA - 45 acres; MVEHA – 4 acres)

Streets: 7 total miles of private streets (MVHOA–4.2 miles; MVEHA–1.8 miles).

Street sweeping – Not provided by Manhattan Beach. Provided by MVHOA & MVEHA

Landscaping: Trees: 2800 trees (2500 – MVHOA; 300 – MVEHA)  
Bushes: Est. 10,500 bushes (10,000 – MVHOA; 500-MVEHA).  
Treatments: Over 10 years of landscape treatments that are safe  
for humans and pets. No glysophate for over 10 years.

Use of blowers – As a private property, we have been using low emission blowers for many years.

Complaints by 3 owners caused the City to send written correspondence, indicating that we could not use blowers at all. And we stopped using the blowers and over the following 8 months, the landscape and hardscape became unkept. Now that we are in a new budget year, we have hired 2 additional landscape crew members to rake and sweep. Owners are paying \$25 extra per month for this service.

### **Request:**

Therefore, after much investigation, this packet explains our request for an exemption from the ordinance, which is supported by over 95% of our residents on a recent survey. Our request is to use no emission blowers, which do not pollute are confirmed to be quieter and less forceful. This request is supported by the California Air Resources Board.







## California Air Resources Board

### Lawn, Garden & Landscape Equipment

Gallon for gallon of gasoline used, the small gasoline engines found in lawn mowers, leaf blowers, and other power equipment pollute at a higher rate than other equipment and vehicles. The California Air Resources Board regulations have led the way to less polluting engines but use of zero emission electric equipment can help meet California's air quality goals sooner.

#### Did you know?

- Currently, a new gas-powered mower running for 1 hour produces similar emissions to the average car driving for 100 miles.
- Converting to electric equipment can eliminate the emissions from lawn and garden equipment and improve both local and regional air quality.
- This would reduce the occurrence of asthma, cardiovascular disease and premature death caused by air pollution.
- There are many options available for electric lawn and garden equipment, as well as landscapers and lawn maintenance companies that use all electric equipment.

### Zero-Emission Lawn Equipment

When deciding which equipment is right for you, there is lots of advice available on the web. Consumer Reports and Popular Mechanics have reviews of many types of zero-emission lawn and garden equipment. Searching for the type of electric equipment you are interested in and "reviews" (e.g., "electric lawn mower reviews") will bring up many results. A selection of reviews are listed below.

Source	Equipment Reviewed		
Popular Mechanics	<a href="#">Mower</a>	<a href="#">String Trimmer</a>	<a href="#">Chainsaw</a> <a href="#">Leaf Blower</a>
Top Ten Reviews	<a href="#">Mower</a>	<a href="#">String Trimmer</a>	<a href="#">Hedge Trimmer</a>
Consumer Reports	<a href="#">Mower</a>	<a href="#">String Trimmer</a>	
Bob Vila	<a href="#">Mower</a>		
Backyard Boss	<a href="#">String Trimmer</a>		
Essential Home and Garden	<a href="#">Mower</a>		
Morning Chores	<a href="#">Hedge Trimmer</a>		
The Saw Guy	<a href="#">Chain Saw</a>		
The Tool Report	<a href="#">Mower</a>		
Yard Care Gurus	<a href="#">Leaf Blower</a>		

Website: <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/index.php/our-work/programs/zero-emission-landscaping-equipment/zero-emission-lawn-equipment-reviews>

## [The Atlantic Argument](#)

### **Something's Wrong With Fall in America**

**Nov 14, 2018**

**Authors:** [Vishakha Darbha](#), [James Fallows](#)

*Video by* [The Atlantic](#)

With all the problems plaguing America today, it can be difficult to prioritize which to address. But just because a problem may not be headline-worthy doesn't mean it isn't a problem.

Take gas-powered leaf blowers, for example.

In a new [Atlantic Argument](#), writer James Fallows advocates for phasing out the machines—which emit noise up to a dangerous 112 decibels—in favor of quieter and safer battery-powered leaf blowers.

This shift, says Fallows, “has community interest, worker interest, public health, and technological momentum on its side. To really ‘make America great again,’ we need to ban gas-powered leaf blowers.”

We want to hear what you think about this article. [Submit a letter](#) to the editor or write to [letters@theatlantic.com](mailto:letters@theatlantic.com).

Watch the video: <https://www.theatlantic.com/video/index/575800/gas-leafblowers>