

LEAF BLOWER USE – BEST PRACTICES



The City's leaf blowing ordinance outlines the minimum requirements for leaf blower use. Why not take the extra step to be considerate of your neighbor and ensure the safest possible use of your equipment? The best practices outlined below will get you started. **Thanks for being a good neighbor!**

Courtesy

- Speak with your neighbors regarding the use of leaf blower equipment, within permissible dates and hours, so that needs for quiet time can be balanced with needs for accomplishing maintenance work.
- Be considerate of neighbors, pedestrians and others nearby. Some may have respiratory illness or allergies that could be triggered by flying dust and debris.
- Be aware of surroundings. Do not use in close proximity to children playing, people reading, school groups gathering, or others nearby.
- Do not blow toward open windows or doors. If possible, do not use within 10 feet of windows or doors.

Use

- Check equipment regularly for proper operation.
- Use leaf blowing equipment at the lowest possible speed/throttle to accomplish task.
- Use the full nozzle extension so that the air stream can work close to the ground.
- Do not use for construction dust, plaster dust or dry soil. Spray dusty areas with water before using blower.
- Do not use blower to move large mounds of debris from one location to another.
- Use rakes or brooms for heavier debris and to loosen debris from corners and edges.
- You may not blow debris onto adjacent property, the street, catch basins, gutters, vehicles, people or pets.

Safety

- Use ear and eye protection as well as face masks.

Visit www.cambridgema.gov/leafblowers for more information.

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Leaf Blower Regulations

A Guide for Property Owners,
Residents, Businesses and Employees



Printed on recycled paper.

This brochure is available en Español and Português.

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www.cambridgema.gov/leafblowers





■ CONVENIENCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

Leaf blowing is a convenience that brings with it certain responsibilities. A combination of regulation, courtesy and planning will help Cambridge residents, property-owners, businesses and employees peacefully coexist.

A new leaf blower ordinance was recently passed by the Cambridge City Council. If you wish to use a leaf blower within the City of Cambridge, it is essential that you familiarize yourself with the ordinance in effect.

■ ORDINANCE REQUIREMENTS

Effective Date

The ordinance takes effect on March 1, 2008

Equipment Affected

Portable, handheld or backpack-style power equipment, powered by fuel or electricity, and used in landscape or property maintenance for blowing, removing or redistributing leaves, dust, dirt, clippings, litter and any other debris.

Equipment Standards

Leaf blowers must meet current EPA emissions standards and the sound emitted from any leaf blower shall be rated by the manufacturer to be no greater than 65 decibels.

Number of Leaf Blowers Permitted

Only one leaf blower may be used in parcels of 10,000 square feet or smaller. Larger parcels may only use one leaf blower within each 10,000 square foot area.

Commercial Operators

Commercial Leaf Blower Operators are prohibited from use of leaf blower equipment unless they have sought and obtained an exemption from the City Manager. This category includes any entity or organization that employs two (2) or more employees to operate leaf blowers. Municipal operators and municipal contractors are excluded from this definition.

Large Property Owner Exemptions

Owners of large properties may be eligible to operate leaf blowers during summer months and on Sundays and Holidays under certain circumstances.

■ DATES AND TIMES

Dates Permitted

March 15 – June 15;
September 15 – December 31

Dates Prohibited

January 1 – March 14;
June 16 – September 14;
all Sundays and Legal holidays,
except for Columbus Day and Veterans Day

Hours of Use (during permitted dates)

Monday – Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Columbus Day: 12 noon – 5:00 p.m.
Veteran’s Day: 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

For further details about ordinance requirements, visit www.cambridgema.gov/leafblowers

■ ENFORCEMENT

Leaf blower operators are required to be in compliance with the regulations outlined in this brochure at all times. Reports of violations should be directed to the appropriate department as listed below.



During City office hours
License Commission
617-349-6140.

After-hours
Police Department
617-349-3300.

E-mail If you prefer, you may send questions or comments by e-mail to leafblowers@cambridgema.gov

■ QUESTIONS

Visit www.cambridgema.gov/leafblowers or contact the City Manager’s Office at 617-349-4300 or leafblowers@cambridgema.gov

■ MORE INFORMATION

For additional information, including the full ordinance (Cambridge Municipal Code Section 8.16.081), visit www.cambridgema.gov/leafblowers

