

## Amy Harvey

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**From:** Town Council  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 02, 2024 5:25 PM  
**To:** Jim  
**Cc:** Adam Searing; Amy Ryan; Camille Berry; Elizabeth Sharp; Jeanne Brown; Jess Anderson; Karen Stegman; Melissa McCullough; Paris Miller-Foushee; Theodore Nollert; Amy Harvey; Ann Anderson; Carolyn Worsley; CHRIS BLUE; James Baker; Loryn Clark; Mary Jane Nirdlinger; Ross Tompkins; Sabrina Oliver; Susan Brown; Celisa J. Leheuw; Britany Waddell  
**Subject:** RE: Petition to Mayor and Council

Hello Jim,

Thanks for your message and the petition submission. I have copied the Mayor, individual Councilmembers and appropriate staff on this message.

Best,

Shay Stevens

Shay C. Stevens | She/Her  
Community Relations Manager  
Manager's Office  
Town of Chapel Hill  
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-5705  
Phone: (919) 968-2833

-----Original Message-----

From: Jim <bulbrook@gmail.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2024 12:25 PM  
To: Town Council <mayorandcouncil@townofchapelhill.org>; All Agenda Materials <allclerk@townofchapelhill.org>; manager@townofchapelhill.org  
Subject: Petition to Mayor and Council

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Hello!

A group of residents located in The Oaks Neighborhood would like to petition to speak for 3 mins at next week's meeting. We would like to provide some data on the noise leaf blowers generate and offer some solutions to noise coming from blowers around town. Currently blowers are allowed to operate every single day between 9am-5pm

Over the years blowers have become louder and more powerful, now far exceeding the 65db noise limit at 50' allowed by the LUMO. Blowers in my neighborhood can be heard half-a-mile away. Enforcement is by calling 911. Rather

burdening the police with 911 calls that we would like to propose a discussion to develop a reasonable regulations regarding leaf blowers. The goal is to restore peace and quiet at the very least some days of the week.

Thank you  
Jim Bulbrook

10-9-24

To: Town of Chapel Hill  
From: Group of The Oaks Homeowners  
Re: Petition to modify LUMO standards for leaf blowing

We are all very familiar with the incredibly distinct and powerful sound of leaf blowers. There is hardly a day or even a span of a few hours where we do not hear that sound.

The noise has become a nuisance and is incessant. It is like living next to construction site every day of the week.

Our community can make changes to take back the peace and quiet. We have a right to the quiet use and enjoyment of our property. We are here to petition the town to come up with and implement reasonable restrictions on the use of leaf blowers.

The current LUMO guidelines for leaf blowers allow their use every single day from 9am-5pm. They also restrict the db rating (ie noise rating) to 65db at 50 feet.

Over the years leaf blowers have become incredibly powerful, and the noise output has increased exponentially. Combine that with multiple leaf blowers being used at once, and the noise becomes unbearable.

Our group has recorded a video using professional equipment, of a single leaf blower producing 82dB at 50 feet. Since db reading is a logarithmic scale, this is MUCH louder than the 'allowed' 65 db.

Changes in decibels directly impact our perception of loudness. For every 10-decibel increase, the sound is perceived to be twice as loud.

Therefore, an 82 db reading is around 2.5x as loud as a 65 db reading. This means when the LUMO is not followed, as almost every backpack blower being used today does not, we are exposed to 2.5x the noise pollution allowed.

We measured going from one blower to two blowers as an increase in 5-10db, almost twice as loud.

Southern Village recently passed an amendment to their community HOA to ban gas leaf blowers. While this is a great win for their community, as battery technology gets better the noise output of electric blowers may meet or exceed that of gas-powered blowers.

Other communities around the nation have implemented reasonable rules and regulations to limit leaf blowers use, that data is attached to the petition.

Our proposal is this:

1. Limit the days of the week blowers may be used in certain zones of town, this can rotate.
2. Limit the equipment that homeowners and contractors can use to a 65db noise rating.  
Almost every manufacture offers models at reasonable prices to limit noise output.
3. Modify the golf course exclusion in the LUMO to move back the start time of 6:30am and give reasonable noise limits on their equipment.

Thank you

## Leaf Blower Best Practices

Greenwich CT. –

- Gasoline-powered leaf blowers in residential zones are prohibited from 6:00 p.m. the Friday before Memorial Day through September 30, except for properties of 2+ acres where the prohibition ends the day after Labor Day.
- Any leaf blower may not be used between 6 p.m. and 8 a.m. Monday through Friday and between 3 p.m. and 9 a.m. Saturday, Sunday and holidays.
- Commercial use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers on premises in residential zones is prohibited on Sundays.
- Commercial and/or residential parcels of one-quarter (1/4) acre or less may only be serviced by one leaf blower at any given time.
- Electric leaf blowers are permitted year-round.

<https://www.greenwichct.gov/2599/Noise-Ordinance>

### Summary of Noise Activity Schedule

	M-F	Sat	Sun	Holiday
Construction Noise 6B-6(1)	7:00am-6:00pm	9:00am-5:00pm	None	None
Garbage 6B-6b	5:00am-9:00pm	5:00am-9:00pm	5:00am-9:00pm	5:00am-9:00pm
Domestic Power Tools 6B-6e(1)	8:00am-9:00pm	8:00am-9:00pm	8:00am-9:00pm	8:00am-9:00pm
Leaf Blowers 6B-6e(3)	8:00-6:00pm	9:00am-3:00pm	9:00am-3:00pm No Commercial Operation	9:00am-3:00pm

Boulder CO

[https://library.municode.com/co/boulder/codes/municipal\\_code?nodeId=TIT5GEOF\\_CH9\\_NO\\_5-9-3EXDESOLEPR](https://library.municode.com/co/boulder/codes/municipal_code?nodeId=TIT5GEOF_CH9_NO_5-9-3EXDESOLEPR)

(3) Sound from a source regulated by this subsection:

- (A) Sound from a source on private property shall be measured at or inside the property line of property other than that on which the sound source is located;
- (B) Sound from a source on public property may be measured on that receiving property so long as the measurement is taken at least twenty-five feet from the source, or it may be measured at or inside the property line of receiving property other than the public property on which the sound source is located;

<i>Zoning District of the Property on Which the Sound is Received</i>	<i>Maximum Number of Decibels Permitted from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m. of the Same Day</i>	<i>Maximum Number of Decibels Permitted from 11 p.m. until 7 a.m. of the Following Day</i>
Residential	55 dBA	50 dBA
Mixed use and other	65 dBA	60 dBA
Industrial	80 dBA	75 dBA

Naples FL

Gas powered blowers banned

25 ft from property line

**(15) Leaf blowers. The use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers is prohibited within the city. This prohibition will become effective one year from the date approved by Council.**

**a. Battery- and electric-powered leaf blowers may be used within the city provided they do not exceed a decibel level of 65 dBA as shown on the manufacturers label affixed to the leaf blower.**

**b. Battery- and electric-powered leaf blowers that do not have a manufacturers label affixed to it that reflects its dBA rating may not be used within the city.**

Table 1

Octave Band Center Frequency (in Hertz.)	Residential Site or Unit*		Non-Residential Site or Unit*		Manufacturing, Industrial, or Agricultural Site or Unit*
	Day 7 a.m.—10 p.m.	Night 10 p.m.—7 a.m.	Day 7 a.m.—10 p.m.	Night 10 p.m.—7 a.m.	
31.5	69	64	74	69	79
63	69	64	74	69	79
125	66	61	71	66	76

Ordinance 2020-14542

Octave Band Center Frequency (in Hertz.)	Residential Site or Unit*		Non-Residential Site or Unit*		Manufacturing, Industrial, or Agricultural Site or Unit*
	Day 7 a.m.—10 p.m.	Night 10 p.m.—7 a.m.	Day 7 a.m.—10 p.m.	Night 10 p.m.—7 a.m.	
250	62	57	67	62	72
500	58	53	63	58	68
1,000	53	48	58	53	63
2,000	49	44	54	49	59
4,000	46	41	51	46	56
8,000	42	37	47	42	<u>52</u>
DBA	60	55	65	60	70

- (14) *Lawn, landscape, and tree maintenance.* Permitted days and hours of operation for lawn and landscape maintenance, tree trimming, and tree removal. Lawn and landscape maintenance activities, tree trimming activities, and tree removal activities may be conducted only during the

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following hours, Monday through Sunday except New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day:

- a. *Monday through Friday hours of operation:*
  1. In residential areas: 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
  2. In nonresidential areas: 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- b. *Saturday hours of operation:*
  1. Businesses that perform lawn and landscape maintenance, tree trimming, or tree removal services may perform services in residential and nonresidential areas from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
  2. Residents may perform lawn and landscape maintenance activities in residential areas at their own property from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- c. *Sunday hours of operation:*
  1. Businesses that perform lawn and landscape maintenance, tree trimming, or tree removal services are prohibited from working on any Sunday in residential or nonresidential areas.
  2. Residents may perform lawn and landscape maintenance activities in residential areas at their own property from 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.