

Town of Ridgefield

CT Gas Powered Leaf Blower Ordinance

10.22.26

Section 1. Purpose

The purpose of this ordinance is to balance the need for seasonal landscape maintenance with the community's interest in preserving peace, quiet enjoyment of property, and public health by regulating the use of gas powered leaf blowers within the Town of Ridgefield.

Section 2. Definitions

"Gas-Powered Leaf Blower" means any portable, handheld, backpack, or wheeled device powered by gasoline, which is designed to move leaves, grass clippings, debris, or similar materials by means of a forced air stream.

"Electric Leaf Blower" means any portable, handheld, backpack, or wheeled device powered by batteries or electricity, which is designed to move leaves, grass clippings, debris, or similar materials by means of a forced air stream.

"Property Boundary" means the legal lot line separating one parcel from another parcel or public right-of-way.

"Quiet Summer Period" means the period commencing at 12:01 a.m. on Memorial Day and ending at 11:59 p.m. on Labor Day of each calendar year.

"Noise Ordinance" refers to the Town's existing regulations on noise levels, specifically those addressing decibel levels during different times of day

Section 3. Quiet Summer Period Operating Hours

- A. Gas-powered leaf blowers may not be operated in the Quiet Summer Period – 12:01am on Memorial Day and ending at 11:59pm on Labor Day of each calendar year.
- B. During this Quiet Summer Period electric powered leaf blowers are permitted to be used on all properties during the following hours:
 - i. Monday through Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 - ii. Saturday, Sunday and Federal holidays: 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Section 4. Use Outside Quiet Summer Period and Hours

- A. Outside of the Quiet Summer Period Hours, beginning the day after Labor Day and ending the day before Memorial Day, gas-powered leaf blowers, may operate during the following hours:
 - i. Monday through Friday: 7:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
 - ii. Saturday, Sunday and Federal holidays: 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
- B. Except as provided in subsection 4.C, the operation of gas-powered leaf blowers outside the dates and hours specified in subsection 4.A is prohibited.
- C. Electric leaf blowers are permitted to be used year-round in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- D. On properties greater than 3 contiguous acres, a gas-powered leaf blower may be operated year round.
- E. The burden of demonstrating compliance shall rest with the property owner or contractor conducting the work.

Section 5. Exemptions

The provisions of this ordinance shall not apply to:

- 1. Emergency response activities by police, fire, public works, or utility personnel.
- 2. Storm cleanup following severe weather events as designated by the First Selectpersons.
- 3. Public utility work necessary to restore essential services.
- 4. Agricultural operations on active farms.
- 5. Any temporary exemption authorized by the First Selectperson for reasons of public health, safety, or welfare.

Section 6. Enforcement

- A. This ordinance may be enforced by the Ridgefield Police Department, Animal Control Officer, Zoning Enforcement Officer, Constable.
- B. Any person violating this ordinance shall receive:
 - 1. First violation: Written warning.
 - 2. Second violation within twelve (12) months: \$100 fine.
 - 3. Third and subsequent violations within twelve (12) months: \$250 fine per occurrence.

Each day a violation occurs shall constitute a separate offense.

Section 7. Appeals

- A. Any person aggrieved by a decision made pursuant to this ordinance may submit a written appeal to the First Selectperson within fourteen (14) calendar days of the date of the decision.
- B. The appeal shall state the grounds upon which the decision is contested and include any supporting documentation the appellant wishes to have considered.
- C. The First Selectperson, or the First Selectperson's designee, shall review the appeal and issue a written determination within thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of the appeal. The determination shall affirm, modify, or reverse the original decision.
- D. The determination issued under this section shall constitute the final administrative decision of the Town.

Section 8. Effective Date

This ordinance shall take effect on January 1, 2027, following adoption in accordance with the Town Charter and applicable Connecticut law.