

LEAF BLOWER OVERVIEW

January 7, 2026





CURRENT ORDINANCE

Electric Leaf Blowers

- Allowed year-round for landscaping and yard maintenance.



Gas-Powered Leaf Blowers

- Allowed only during seasonal cleanup periods: March 1 – April 30 and October 1 – December 15 each year.
- Outside those dates, gas blowers are prohibited.
- Except within *R-1 residence districts* or on lots >1 acre, only one gas blower may be used per lot during allowed periods.



CURRENT ORDINANCE

Days & Hours of Operation

- Motorized landscaping equipment (leaf blowers, lawn mowers, etc.) may be used:
 - 8AM to 6PM on weekdays
 - 10AM. to 4PM on weekends
- Prohibited on holidays, Rosh Hashanah, and Yom Kippur.
- The DPW Superintendent can temporarily expand gas blower use after major storm events or emergencies (up to 14 days).





CURRENT ORDINANCE - PROBLEMS

Complicated – a host of exemptions that can be cumbersome to explain, interpret and enforce.



Noncompliance – over 400 tickets issued since October.



Enforcement/Adjudication – violators are issued an appearance ticket/summons by the Rye Police Department for violations and must answer the charge in Rye City Court. This

has put a significant burden on the Police Department, the Office of Corporation Counsel and the Court calendar. It has also put strain on residents who may be first time violators or unaware of the rules.



ISSUES TO SOLVE FOR

An updated ordinance should provide for:

- ✓ Clear rules – city staff need to be able to educate residents on leaf blower rules in clear terms.
- ✓ Easy compliance – clear rules will allow residents to achieve compliance and care for their properties the way they want.
- ✓ Penalties that deter repeat offenders
- ✓ Streamlined enforcement and adjudication – to the extent there are violations, they should be able to be adjudicated administratively. Court appearances should be reserved for repeat offenders.



THE PROPOSED NEW LAW

Moves from partial limits to a clear technology-based standard

- ✓ Only battery-powered electric leaf blowers are permitted year-round. Gas and corded electric leaf blowers are prohibited, subject only to narrowly defined exceptions. This eliminates ambiguity, reduces disputes in the field.

Strengthens penalties to deter repeat violations

- ✓ Existing penalties are relatively modest and often treated as a cost of doing business.
- ✓ The proposal introduces:
 - Meaningful escalation for repeat offenses
 - Authority to issue court appearance tickets but does not unnecessarily require court appearances for first time infractions
 - Potential civil forfeiture for chronic violators



THE PROPOSED NEW LAW

Reduces noise, emissions, and resident complaints simultaneously

✓ Battery-powered equipment:

- Is significantly quieter
- Produces no on-site emissions
- Reduces early-morning and weekend conflicts

Simplifies communication and public education

- ✓ Instead of explaining dates, exceptions, equipment types, and lot-size rules, the City can now say "Only battery-powered leaf blowers are allowed"

THANK YOU

