



Quiet Clean NOVA



Dear Faith Community Leader,

Quiet Clean Nova is a grass-roots organization in Northern Virginia whose aim is to improve our quality of life by curbing the use of noisy, polluting gas-powered landscape equipment, especially leaf blowers. A logical and accessible alternative are electric mowers, blowers, edgers and hedge trimmers. They are less noisy, emission-free, and have lower maintenance costs.

Gas-powered leaf blowers subject landscape workers to exhaust loaded with carcinogens and particulate matter. The blowers' noise can damage hearing. That deep, oscillating noise has been shown to travel farther and penetrate walls more easily than other types of engine noise. It's like second-hand smoke – you can't escape it. The problem has grown as more people work and study at home.

As a culture, we have come to see pristinely manicured lawns as the appropriate way to landscape property. But science has shown this type of maintenance is harmful to the ecosystems that make up all of creation. In response to these concerns, Fairfax and Arlington counties have agreed to phase out the use of gas-powered leaf blowers on county property. Washington DC has banned the use and sale of gas-powered leaf blowers as of Jan. 1, 2022. A similar ban has been proposed in Montgomery County. They are all leading the way to a quieter, cleaner future.

Many faith communities strive to be good stewards of the Earth. We hope they will also set good examples by reassessing the stewardship of their own patch of creation. We respectfully ask:

1. If you maintain your own property, please consider switching to battery powered leaf blowers and other tools, particularly as your gas-powered tools need to be retired.
2. If you hire a landscape company, please ask them to use electric equipment, especially leaf blowers.
3. If your landscape company isn't responsive to your request, please switch to a more flexible one.

Faith communities, who often own and maintain campuses of lawn, can lead by example and help create a market for environmentally sound landscape practices, protect the health of workers, and provide better care for creation. We ask you to join the effort to make our community quieter and cleaner.

Sincerely,
Joan Lowy
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