

August 5, 2020

Protecting Landscaping Workers And Our Air Quality: You Can Help

To the Editor:

The recent renewed national focus on equity as well as the multiple impacts of the coronavirus pandemic have made it especially important to focus on protecting everyone's health, especially the health of outdoor workers in our community.

During the summer months, when poor air quality already poses a health risk, the use of gas-powered lawn equipment for landscaping maintenance in general, and gas-powered leaf blowers in particular, makes the problem even worse. Lawn equipment and leaf blowers emit pollutants and fine particulates that are hazardous to human health and are often loud enough to damage the hearing of workers who are not adequately protected.

Homeowners and businesses that employ landscaping services can help by asking them to limit or discontinue the use of gas-powered leaf blowers and/or convert to electric or battery-powered equipment and to provide hearing protection for all workers. Cloth face coverings also may be of some respiratory protection, and of course should be available, and worn, when workers cannot maintain physical distancing from

each other while working or traveling between work sites.

For a list of landscapers that use electric and battery-powered equipment and other less polluting and quieter methods, please visit www.quietprinceton.org and click on “quiet landscapers.”

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Writers' note: This letter was endorsed by both the Princeton Board of Health and the Princeton Environmental Commission at their July meetings.

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