John Deere 45 BP comes with padded harness and backrest.

Selbro Pro-Blow mounts to Walker ZTR mower.

BEWARE: BLOWER BANS

Your community could be next for 'Project Quiet Yard.'

by JERRY ROCHE / Editor-in-Chief

Landscapers from coast to coast are not taking too kindly to some of their local leaders lately. From as far east as Scarsdale, N.Y., about 15 miles north of Manhattan, to as far west as Los Angeles, they are being threatened by anti-leaf blower legislation.

In Los Angeles, Marvin Braude heads a committee that recommends a law to ban the use of backpack blowers within 500 feet of residential living units.

"Obviously, Councilman Braude is pretty intent on going after this issue again," says Robin Pendergrast of International Marketing Exchange, which represents Echo, Inc., a leading blower maker. "My feeling is that he has a hard, tough road ahead of him, as he has in the past."

The entire L.A. city council will probably have a public hearing on May 14th, prior to a vote on the proposed blower ban.

In Scarsdale, landscapers are not allowed to use any power leaf blower that is louder than 75 decibels. At certain times of the day—according to a city law—they cannot even use a blower louder than 55 decibels.

Members of the New York Turf & Landscape Association are poised to go back to court a third time to battle the legislation, which was allowed by an appellate panel of three state Supreme Court justices early this year, after being disallowed late last year.

"Improper procedure lost us the case," says New York Turf & Landscape Association president Joe Tinelli of Westchester County. "But we are re-submitting all the paperwork and we’re going to have it contested again this summer on the basis of constitutionality."

The association has already spent nearly $18,000 on the case, not including the $4,000 to re-submit.

"We’re planning a public forum where both sides can take off the gloves and go at it," says Tinelli. "People are being brainwashed by that 'Project Quiet Yard' group out of Connecticut, which is travelling all over the country.

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POWER BLOWERS FOR PROFESSIONAL USE

ECHO
(847) 540-8400
Circle No. 280
PB4600 has 44cc engine; 70 dBA; 22 lbs.; tube-mounted throttle control offers one-hand operation; 5,000 cu. ft./min.; directional chute; 175 mph, 5500 cu. ft./min.

ENCELE
(402) 228-4255
Circle No. 281
Pro-Line walk-behind blower has 8 hp industrial/commercial engine; adjustable chute; heavy-duty front caster; heavy-duty pneumatic rear wheels with re-greasable roller bearings; wide air intake vent

FRAadan
(914) 632-3769
Circle No. 282
Model BB-50 Bac-Pac has 41cc Fradan engine; 236 mph air speed; 590 cu. ft./min. air volume; 67 dBA with large 3-qt. fuel tank

Jacobsen
(914) 637-6711
Circle No. 283
B-40 is a high-volume blower that mounts to any 25 hp, 540 rpm tractor with three-point linkage; 5,000 cu. ft./min.; directional chute; all-steel construction

John Deere
(919) 850-0123
Circle No. 284
Model 458BP (back pack) has air speed of 180 mph with padded harness and backrest; 44cc engine; air volume of 370 cu. ft./min.; twist-lock pipe section for hard-to-reach areas

Lesco
(216) 333-9250
Circle No. 285
Hydraulic Drive Wheel Blower 4000 is a walk-behind with 16 hp Briggs & Stratton engine, variable speed hydraulic drive; remote control side deflector; heavy-duty swiveling front caster wheel

LITTLE WONDER
(215) 357-5110
Circle No. 286
Commercial walk-behind has 11 hp engine; ergonomically-designed handle; 12-gauge steel housing; five-year warranty

Maruyama
(206) 885-0811
Circle No. 287
BL400 backpack: 40.2cc Kawasaki engine; 475 cu. ft./min. air volume, 220 mph air speed; 21.2 lbs.

McQuay
(630) 828-0200
Circle No. 288
8-bladed, welded fan; positive ratchet throttle lever; 22 lbs.; quiet low-tone muffler

Selbro
(419) 483-9918
Circle No. 289
Model PB-18WLKR mounts to Walker ZTR mower; air speeds up to 175 mph with 4500 cu. ft./min. out

Shindaiwa
(503) 692-3070
Circle No. 290
EB480 introduced last month; noise rating of 69 dBA; 43cc engine; blowing speed of 180 mph; fuel shut-off on throttle control lever; Walbro carburetor; convenient tube design; under 20 lbs.

SNAPPER
(770) 954-2598
Circle No. 291
Model SLB514 is walk-behind with 5 hp Briggs & Stratton engine; 125 mph air speed; 1500 cu. ft./min. air volume

Stihl
(804) 245-4228
Circle No. 292
BR400: 57cc engine with air flow rate; quiet; 69dBa; one-year professional warranty

Toro
(612) 887-8801
Circle No. 293
Gas Blower/Vac has 31 cc engine; weighs 12 lbs.; full two-year warranty; variable speed throttle control, super low tone muffler

VanderMolen
(201) 992-8506
Circle No. 294
Windmill Model 856BT has air volume of 800 cu. ft./min. and 225 mph air speed; weighs 20.9 lbs.; 1-year commercial warranty, 5-year ignition module warranty; extra large fuel tank

Yamazen
(303) 469-7811
Circle No. 295
U-4000P backpack has 37cc engine; weighs 20 lbs.; 3000 cu. ft./min. air volume; 175 mph air speed; weighs 20 lbs.; 1-year commercial warranty, 5-year ignition module warranty; extra large fuel tank

Yard King
(314) 355-9000
Circle No. 296
Model PB-188 has 11 hp Briggs & Stratton engine; blowing speed of 180 mph; fuel shut-off on throttle control lever; Walbro carburetor; convenient tube design; weighs 41 lbs.

YardMachines
(606) 645-7774
Circle No. 297
Model PB-208 has 11 hp Briggs & Stratton engine; blowing speed of 180 mph; fuel shut-off on throttle control lever; Walbro carburetor; convenient tube design; weighs 41 lbs.; 2-year commercial warranty; 5-year ignition module warranty; extra large fuel tank

Zander
(330) 828-0200
Circle No. 298
Model 410A has air volume of 4430 cu. ft./min.; 150 mph air speed; weighs 30 lbs.; 1-year commercial warranty; 5-year ignition module warranty; extra large fuel tank

Zug
(630) 828-0200
Circle No. 299
Model PB-208 has 11 hp Briggs & Stratton engine; blowing speed of 180 mph; fuel shut-off on throttle control lever; Walbro carburetor; convenient tube design; weighs 41 lbs.; 2-year commercial warranty; 5-year ignition module warranty; extra large fuel tank
"All we want is a compromise. We know that there's no reason to have four blowers going on one property at the same time," Tinelli concedes. "But the other side is becoming absolutely ridiculous. It's getting to be a trendy thing to get involved with, like 'Save the Whales.'"

Echo Manufacturing—which is planning to release an ultra-low-noise backpack blower before the end of the year—recommends that commercial power blower users follow these operating tips to avoid upsetting homeowners and thus decreasing the possibility of further government intrusion into their livelihoods:

1) Use the blower at less than full throttle, if possible. Remember, it's not how far you're blowing debris but how the job looks when it's done.

2) Operate power blowers only at reasonable hours (not early in the morning or late at night).

3) Avoid open windows and other places where dust and noise might be a nuisance.

4) Develop skills in using accessories such as misters and nozzle attachments.

5) Clean up debris that has been assembled by the blower—promptly.

6) Keep the blower in good working order. Routinely check the muffler, air intakes, air filter and fuel filter. 

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