

BAN from preceding page article in the *Scarsdale Inquirer*. The newspaper quoted the judge:

"When you're depriving someone of his livelihood, you have to do it by the least restrictive means, and if there are regulations that would do it, then you have to do it that way."

Michael Bellantoni of the New York State Green Industry Association was pleased with the outcome.

"This was an important decision for our industry," he noted, "and a recognition of the view of the silent majority of our customers who appreciate the tools of our trade."

"This, of course, does not relieve us from using prudence in the use of leaf blowers, in a way that minimizes inconvenience or disturbance to surrounding neighbors. This decision will (also) require us to contest other leaf blower bans."

Such laws remain in effect in Pelham, New Rochelle, Atlantic Beach and Larchmont, N.Y., and certain other communities in California and Michigan.

January thaw may lead to fewer spring flowers in northern states

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa.—You may have noticed flowering bulbs sending up shoots, and buds opening on shrubs and trees during January's warm spell. This may be bad news for some spring flowers, says J. Robert Nuss, professor of ornamental horticulture at Penn State.

"Warm weather, thawed soil and plenty of moisture can cause woody ornamentals and many spring flowering bulbs to break dormancy and begin growing," says Nuss. "With temperatures of 60°F and higher in January, the flower buds on many trees and shrubs have expanded and have even begun to show color."

"These buds are likely to be killed during the freezing weather that followed (in February and early March)," Nuss adds. Shrubs that flower early are most likely to suffer from bud damage: forsythia, flowering quince, jasmine, weigela, lilac, witch hazel and some kinds of viburnum and rhododendron.

"The extent of injury will depend on

the amount of available moisture, how much the buds have opened, and how cold it gets during the remainder of winter," Nuss says. "Plants at higher elevations and in colder areas probably have remained dormant and won't be injured."

There is nothing that landscape managers can do about the problem.

However, foliage on spring bulbs sending up premature shoots probably will not be injured much, Nuss notes.

He cautions that premature foliage will need some protection against nibbling rabbits. "A thin layer of straw or mulch over the leaves will conceal them," he says. "This also helps keep the shoots from being crushed by ice and snow."

If flowers are lost, take heart—it doesn't mean the plant will die. "Most trees and shrubs are quite durable and can survive temperature fluctuations," Nuss concludes. "In any case, those buds that survive will be all the more welcome this spring."

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