

A Raleigh Woman's Fight Against Noisy Leaf Blowers

by Evan Amber and Ted Rueter

Ali Mabel is appalled by the constant noise due to the year-round use of gas-powered leaf blowers.



Ali Mabel

She has found that blowers are operated all day, every day, even in areas recently cleared! Further, many residents and lawn care professionals are quick to use

blowers for simple tasks such as moving cigarette butts, clearing a step of twigs or removing a dusting of snow. Ali serves on the advisory board of Noise Free America: A Coalition to Promote Quiet (noisefree.org) and works as a senior planning analyst at a local health center.



There are negative health consequences of the noise pollution produced by these blaring machines: "The noise is deafening and causes stress," Ali explains. "Gas-powered leaf blower noise penetrates everything. It is inescapable and extremely distracting." She also notes that they pollute the air with dust, dirt and emissions, which is harmful to respi-

ratory health.

Noise control is left to state and local governments—which rarely give the issue serious consideration. Wake County has a noise ordinance (Code of Ordinances, Article III), yet Raleigh is full of high-decibel emitters. While vehicles and amplified music are at least covered, if only loosely enforced, by the noise ordinance, lawn care equipment is specifically exempt during daytime hours.

To address the issue, Ali plans to create awareness through blogs, articles, talks, an easy-to-use app and a Facebook page. She will also promote clean and low-decibel battery-operated leaf blowers as a cost-effective solution. Ali is confident that, together, we can create a quieter, healthier community.

Evan Amber is a wildlife conservation biologist living in Carrboro, NC.

Ted Rueter is the founder and director of Noise Free America: A Coalition to Promote Quiet, based in Chapel Hill, NC.

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Kandace Schuman Dole is a Classical Feng Shui Practitioner, Holistic Design Consultant and Holistic Health Professional. She combines information based on the orientation of your building, construction date and the unique energy and challenges of each occupant (provided by birth dates) and creates a customized Bagua (energy map) for the location. This map, combined with your goals and aspirations, is used as a tool to create an environment that allows you to manifest your highest potential. Benefits include:

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To keep your balance,
you must keep moving.

—Albert Einstein

