

ADEQ Responses to Frequently Asked Questions Executive Order 2007-03

Why am I receiving this notification?

You are receiving this notification to remind you that you may no longer use leaf blowers on State property effective June 30, 2007 as a result of Executive Order 2007-03. This notification also identifies the requirements to follow in purchasing new landscape maintenance equipment for the future, and how to identify low-emission gas cans.

What are the alternatives to leaf blowers?

You can use rakes, brooms, and sweepers instead of leaf blowers. For larger areas, walk behind leaf vacuums are still acceptable.

Can I just use a leaf blower in vacuum mode?

No, because the leaf blower still produces exhaust pollution. Also, research shows that the bags are not effective at controlling the particulate pollution that we're concerned about. The Executive Order is very explicit that leaf blower use stop on State property in the region.

What else does this mean?

These requirements also mean that you should try to buy the cleanest lawn maintenance equipment possible for the purpose you need. As the requirements show, the least-polluting models are manual tools. Next best are electric and propane models. Most small engines are only powered with gasoline, so you should buy the cleanest model available.

Also, future purchases of gas cans should meet the specifications listed in the "ADEQ Requirements" sheet.

What is the purpose of these requirements?

The purpose of these requirements is to help clean up the air in Arizona. Last year, there were 23 days where air pollution levels exceeded federal health-based standards in the Phoenix area. While it seems minor, lawn equipment can produce a lot of pollution. By cleaning up lawn equipment, the State is leading by example.

For many tools like lawn mowers, propane or electric models are available. If possible, propane and electric models are highly preferred. Propane produces up to 70% less smog-forming pollutants than gasoline, 60% less carbon monoxide, and more than 90% fewer toxic chemicals like benzene and toluene. Newer gasoline equipment produces 70% less smog-causing pollution than older models, and even cleaner engine technologies are being developed. As these cleaner engines come into the market, you should buy accordingly.

How do I comply with these requirements?

1. Stop using leaf blowers effective June 30, 2007.
2. Fill out the attached spreadsheet to show what equipment you have and how you plan to replace it with cleaner models. If you purchased the equipment after 2005, chances are it will be in compliance.

3. Use the approved vendor and equipment list to help you identify qualifying new equipment. Indicate when you plan to acquire new equipment, including the purchase order number.
4. Return the form to ADEQ to track progress and compliance
5. For gas cans, make sure that the cans you buy in the future are low-emission.

How can I tell if equipment meets these standards?

For lawn maintenance equipment, the fuel type will be indicated. Remember that propane and electric are the cleanest options. For gasoline equipment, any new equipment will necessarily meet EPA standards.

Low-emission gas cans will become national standard on January 1, 2009. Until then, make sure the gas can has a label marked "Spill-proof system."

What if I have more questions?

For questions about equipment, contact the vendors on the attached document.

If you have questions about compliance, contact Jim Wagner at ADEQ, jw3@azdeq.gov or (602) 771-2388.