

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20

H.190

Introduced by Representatives McCormack of Burlington, Colburn of  
Burlington, and Sullivan of Burlington

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Conservation and development; air pollution control; noise pollution;  
Agency of Natural Resources; leaf blowers; leaf vacuums

Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the  
Agency of Natural Resources to adopt rules regulating leaf blowers and leaf  
vacuums to minimize noise pollution and prevent air pollution from particulate  
matter caused by their use.

An act relating to regulating leaf blowers and leaf vacuums

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. FINDINGS

The General Assembly finds that:

(1) The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines particulate  
matter or particle pollution as a “complex mixture of extremely small particles  
and liquid droplets,” including soil and dust particles.

(2) These particles are divided into two groups: inhalable coarse  
particles or PM10 particles, and inhalable fine particles or PM2.5 particles.

1           (3) The EPA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention state  
2           that particles that are smaller than PM10 can cause serious health problems  
3           through inhalation. These can include “premature death in people with heart or  
4           lung disease, nonfatal heart attacks, irregular heartbeat, aggravated asthma,  
5           decreased lung function, and increased respiratory symptoms, such as irritation  
6           of the airways, coughing, or difficulty breathing.”

7           (4) The University of California College of Engineering – Center for  
8           Environmental Research and Technology has found that leaf blowers and leaf  
9           vacuums are a measurable cause of PM10 and PM2.5 emissions.

10           (5) Therefore, the operation of leaf blowers and leaf vacuums may pose  
11           a risk to the health of Vermonters.

12           (6) The State of Arizona has restricted the use of leaf blowers under  
13           Ariz. Rev. Stat. Ann § 11-877. That statute requires certain counties to  
14           prohibit the use of leaf blowers to blow debris onto roadways. Additionally,  
15           when a High Pollution Advisory is in effect, the use of leaf blowers by  
16           employers and contractors of those same Arizona counties must be restricted.  
17           These restrictions aim to reduce particle pollution. Other U.S. municipalities  
18           also limit the use of leaf blowers by ordinance.

1 Sec. 2. 10 V.S.A. § 586 is added to read:

2 § 586. REGULATION OF LEAF BLOWERS

3 On or before January 1, 2018, the Secretary shall adopt rules regulating the  
4 use of leaf blowers and leaf vacuums to minimize noise pollution and to  
5 prevent air pollution from particulate matter due to the operation of leaf  
6 blowers to move debris and leaf vacuums to collect debris. As used in this  
7 section:

8 (1) “Leaf blower” means any portable power equipment designed or  
9 operated to produce a current of air by fuel, electricity, or other means to push,  
10 propel, or blow dust, leaves, grass clippings, cuttings and trimmings from trees  
11 and shrubs, refuse, trash, or other debris.

12 (2) “Leaf vacuum” means any movable power equipment designed or  
13 operated to produce suction by fuel, electricity, or other means to gather and  
14 collect dust, leaves, grass clippings, refuse, or other debris.

15 Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE

16 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.