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# ENVIRONMENTAL Fact Sheet

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## Take Steps to Limit Air Emissions When Using Garden Equipment

Did you know that every time you mow your lawn, you are contributing to air pollution? According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), one hour operating a new gasoline lawn mower emits the same amount of volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxide driving a new car 45 miles. Garden equipment engines produce up to 5% of the nation's air pollution. Gasoline-powered lawn and garden equipment emit air pollutants such as carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides and particulate matter.

Some of these air pollutants contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone and haze. While ozone occurs naturally in the upper atmosphere and shields the earth from harmful radiation, ozone at ground level is a harmful pollutant.

Ground level ozone affects your health, your neighbor's health, and the environment. Ground level ozone is especially harmful to sensitive receptors such as children, the elderly and people with respiratory ailments like asthma.

Exhaust emissions from gasoline-powered engines can lead to health problems such as respiratory disease, cancer, cardiovascular disease, neurological conditions and premature death.

Every time you fill your gas can and mower, you are emitting volatile organic compounds into the air and risk releasing gasoline to the environment through an accidental spill. EPA estimates that over 17 million gallons of gasoline is spilled as garden equipment is refueled each year. This can migrate through the ground and impact your drinking water.



## **Tips for Reducing Emissions from Lawn and Garden Equipment**

### **Switch to Electric Operated Equipment.**

Electric corded or battery -powered lawn and garden equipment produce no emissions and require no gas or oil to operate, hence no annual maintenance. An added bonus is electric garden equipment is significantly quieter than the gasoline fueled equipment.

### **Purchase Newer Equipment.**

If you still want to use a gasoline powered lawn and garden equipment, purchase new and avoid using older equipment. Phase 3 engines, which reduce air pollution up to 70%, have been included in all small non-road equipment since 2012.

### **Maintain your equipment.**

Like cars, properly maintained lawn and garden equipment are less likely to pollute and will perform better and last longer. Perform maintenance as recommended in your user's manual.

### **Avoid spilling gasoline or allowing it to evaporate.**

Because even small gasoline spills evaporate and pollute the air and water, preventing spills and over-fills is an easy and effective way for power equipment owners to prevent pollution. Use a spill-proof gasoline container in a size you can handle easily and hold securely.

### **Shrink your lawn.**

Consider shrinking your lawn or getting rid of it completely. You can plant native grasses and wild flowers instead that may attract pollinating bees and butterflies. If you have less lawn you need to use your garden equipment less which will reduce fossil fuel use and air pollution. A smaller lawn may reduce your water usage too, somewhere between a third and one half of residential water use is for lawn and garden irrigation. Finally, think of all that time you can spend in the hammock looking at your wild flowers rather than mowing the lawn.