

## **Environmental Costs of Gas-powered Lawnmowers**

Gas-powered lawnmowers and tractors have long been popular for homeowners looking to keep their lawns neat and tidy. However, these machines come with an often overlooked environmental cost.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), gas-powered lawn equipment can emit as much pollution in one hour as a car driven for 100 miles. These pollutants include carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These pollutants help form ground-level ozone and smog, adversely affecting human health. In fact, the American Lung Association has stated that exposure to these pollutants can lead to respiratory problems, including asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema.

Collectively, gas-powered lawn equipment produces a significant amount of air pollution, including:

- Carbon dioxide: 30 million tons annually, which is more than Los Angeles emits!
- Nitrogen oxides: 68,000 tons annually, which is similar to the pollution from 30 million cars!!
- Fine particulate matter (PM2.5): 21,800 tons in 2020, which is equivalent to the pollution from 234 million cars in a year!!!

In addition to air pollution, gas-powered lawn equipment also contributes to noise pollution. These machines can produce noise levels of up to 100 decibels, equivalent to a chainsaw or a jackhammer. This noise can be disruptive to humans and wildlife, contributing to hearing loss over time.

To reduce the impact of noise pollution, you can be mindful of the time of day you operate such equipment. Before 9 AM may be too early, and after 9 PM is likely too late. The frequency of use as well as the duration of operation also should be taken into consideration. To reduce the impact on both noise and air pollution, you might consider alternatives such as using an electric-powered mower or lawn tractor, push-reel mower or robotic mower instead of gas-powered equipment.

Sourced from Jay Edwardson