

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

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Two Free Workshops on *Electrifying Lawn Care*

September 10, 2020 (Wellesley, MA) – The Town of Lexington and Town of Wellesley Department of Public Works are sponsoring two FREE upcoming Zoom workshops on making Massachusetts a leader in transitioning land care to low noise, zero emission equipment and people-powered tools. The workshops, organized by MA-based nonprofit, Quiet Communities, Inc. in collaboration with the American Green Zone Alliance (AGZA), cover the health and environmental impacts of gas equipment, the status of advanced technology, and the many exciting initiatives that are occurring in Massachusetts and around the country to improve health and environmental quality.

Attendees at both events will have the chance to win a state-of-the-art electric landscaping tool. Early registration is encouraged as space is limited for each of the workshops.

- *It's Electrifying! A Regional Workshop for Land Care Professionals* is intended for land care professionals and sustainability leaders at businesses, schools, municipalities, and local agencies and organizations. It will include live demonstrations of state-of-the-art electric equipment and battery charging systems, and present on health and safety benefits, the economics of transitioning, and professional training and certification. The workshop will be held via Zoom on **Wednesday, September 30, from 7p.m. - 9 p.m.** Registration can be accessed at: <https://bit.ly/31LqEE0>.
- *Quiet, Healthy Yards: A Regional Residential Land Care Workshop* is intended for residents and town officials. It will include live demonstrations of electric landscaping equipment and garden tools, discuss the health, environmental, and economic benefits of moving away from fossil fuels, including reducing carbon footprint while protecting the health of children and pets. The workshop will be held via Zoom on **Thursday, October 1, from 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.** Registration can be accessed at: <https://bit.ly/3jy5U8K>.

"These workshops will offer residents and professionals the opportunity to learn more about impact issues related to fossil fuel-powered lawn care, and then the chance to consider some of the capable electric equipment, and operational solutions we provide," said Dan Mabe of AGZA, who will lead the demonstrations. "Electric equipment has come a long way."

"It's time to really think about the way we want to live on our properties. As people spend more time at home during the pandemic, interest in cleaner, quieter landscaping has increased," said Jamie Banks, health and environmental scientist and founder of the nonprofit Quiet Communities.

"Lexington is demonstrating that a transition to electric equipment is not just possible but can also be economically sound," said Dave Pinsonneault, Lexington DPW director. "Our strategy is to have the town lead by example in our own community in hopes that the approach will take off in

the state and beyond.” Wellesley DPW Director Dave Cohen agrees: “We are excited to be a part of this effort. Different towns have different needs. We hope to show what is possible and share what we learn so other towns can benefit.”

Dr. Regina LaRocque, an infectious disease specialist and member of the Sustainable Wellesley leadership team, agrees that the time to transition is now. “Climate change is real. The health effects are real. We need to find solutions big and small that are going to be healthier for our families, communities and the planet. A shift to electric-powered landscaping equipment is a solid start made more urgent by the pandemic. When towns take steps like this, we can only hope that addressing pollution from transportation and other infrastructure choices will follow.”

These workshops are part of a holistic town-wide effort in Lexington to shift to quieter more environmentally friendly landscaping practices. Last month in Wellesley, the independent not-for-profit Sustainable Wellesley, and the Town of Wellesley’s Natural Resources Commission and Sustainable Energy Committee, offered a panel discussion focused on concerns about use of gas-powered leaf blowers for routine landscaping.

Key concerns sparking the discussion: noise pollution that can lead to hearing loss; carbon emissions; dangerous exhaust and ground-sourced particulates from animal feces, bacteria, fungi, pollen and chemical lawn treatments; and damage to soil health and beneficial eco-systems.

Interested participants are encouraged to register now for these workshops.

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