

Lawnmower emissions and the environment

The subject of lawnmower engine emissions has long been plagued by public information that is outdated, misstated, and simply not true. Lawnmowers have come under attack in the battle for clean air, and some unrealistic and unfair comparisons have placed the machines in the same league with automobiles. According to the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute, these types of comparisons are misleading for the following reasons:

- An average automobile is driven approximately 14,000 miles in one year and uses hundreds of gallons of gasoline. Even large facilities don't produce those kinds of numbers with their mowing schedules.

- Typical, privately owned walk-behind lawnmowers run an average of 25 hours per year and only use a few gal-

lons of gasoline.

- The estimated number of lawn mowers in the U.S. is approximately 38 million, compared to the 159 million cars that are on our roads.

It has also been claimed that after two years, the average lawnmower will produce 34 times the amount of smog-forming emissions an average passenger car creates. In fact, new automobiles annually generate 10 times more emissions than new lawnmowers. While a new car generates an average of 20 pounds of smog-forming emissions in two years, a new walk-behind mower generates only 2.1 pounds in that same time.

The total contribution of smog-forming emissions from all of the lawn and garden equipment in the U.S. today is

actually less than two percent.

Today's outdoor power equipment engines run, on average, 70-percent cleaner than those built in 1990. Design improvements have produced engines that are more fuel-efficient, more durable, and cleaner-running.

New technologies have produced small, non-road, four-cycle engines that comply with standards established by the EPA for small, spark-ignition engines of 25 horsepower or less. The industry has also developed new, specially designed fuel cans that help reduce emissions caused by spillage.

OPEI is a trade association whose membership is primarily composed of U.S. manufacturers of powered lawn and garden maintenance products, components, attachments, and services.



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