



Lead, Serve, Support

March 10, 2020

From Snow to Mow - Lawn Mowing Returns! Be Careful and Don't Let a Perfect Lawn Come at a Safety Cost!

Staff are treated for injuries involving lawn, garden tools, and equipment EVERY year.

Practice These Lawn Mower Safety Tips:

DRESS APPROPRIATELY - Wear:

- Long pants & close-fitting clothing.
- Sturdy footwear with good traction.
- Impact resistant safety glasses or goggles.
- Ear plugs or ear muffs. Gas powered mowers can range from 90-105 decibels (dB). You should always wear hearing protection whenever noise levels \geq 85 dB.
- Sun protection - a hat, long sleeved shirt, & sunscreen.



PREPARE THE AREA -

- **Pick up items prior to mowing which can be thrown by the blade(s), i.e., sticks, rocks, toys, sporting equipment, etc. - this is a very important step** as rocks have been thrown by a lawn mower, gone through a window and struck an employee in the past - mow with the chute away from windows when possible.
- Look for Immovable objects, i.e., pipes, partially buried rocks, tree roots, etc.
- Check for bystanders, children, pets, & vehicles which could be hit by items thrown by the mower. If others are using/playing in the area, consider returning to mow the area when it's not unoccupied or being used by others.

PREPARE, INSPECT, AND TEST THE MOWER -

- Make sure all protective guards and deflectors are in place and working properly.
- Fill the tank with gasoline & wipe up any spills. Never fuel a hot mower as the hot muffler may ignite vapors.
- Make sure the transmission is out of gear & blade clutch is disengaged BEFORE starting the engine.
- Test drive the mower to become familiar with it BEFORE engaging the mower blade.

USE SAFE MOWING TECHNIQUES -

- Read, document annual and/or initial training, understand & follow the safety instructions on the mower in the manual(s) before starting.
- Stay hydrated.
- Don't get in a hurry while turning corners.
- Avoid mowing soft soil areas and/or wet grass. It can clog the discharge chute; cause the engine to falter; or the mower or operator to slip, increasing the risk of injury.
- Use extreme caution on inclines/declines.
- If the mower is equipped with a seatbelt, WEAR it - it is required by L&I.
- Disengage the mower blade when on pavement, sidewalks, or gravel lanes.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times: look down and behind before moving backwards.
- Never leave a running mower unattended.
- Don't step off a mower/tractor when ANY parts are moving – allow them to come to a complete stop!
- Never put your hands or feet near rotating parts, under the machine, or into the discharge chute.

DON'T allow a passenger on a riding mower or tractor!

SAFETY MATTERS