

TOOLBOX TALKS

A Quality Service Contractors Publication for Members

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Lawn Equipment Safety

Many injuries result from the misuse of power push mowers and power line trimmers. Many accidents involving power lawn equipment result in severe lacerations and often amputations. Wounds caused by these accidents are prone to infection due to the unsanitary conditions of the environment. Help reduce these accidents by following a few simple safety precautions.

Power Push Mowers

- Read the operator's manual and know how to operate the machine properly.
- Don't disable or bypass safety devices.
- Read all equipment warning labels.
- Protect yourself and others against thrown objects by clearing the work area of rocks, sticks, toys, or any other materials that could become a missile if struck by the mower blades.
- Keep the discharge chute guard or grass catcher in place at all times.
- Keep bystanders, especially children, away from the mowing area.
- Keep hands and feet away from the mower blades while it is running. If the discharge chute clogs or the grass catcher is full, stop the engine before attempting to clear the clog or empty the grass catcher.
- Never leave a running mower unattended.
- Stop the engine before adjusting the wheels of the mower.
- Mow in a forward direction whenever possible.
- Do not walk backwards while pulling the mower toward you. If you trip, the mower could end up on top of your feet or legs.
- Mow across the slope of hillsides. Do not mow up and down the slope.

- To ensure good footing, wait until the grass is dry before mowing.
- Handle fuel safely. Before refueling, stop the engine and allow it to cool. Wipe up spilled fuel or allow it to evaporate before starting the engine.
- Never refuel gasoline-powered equipment indoors.

Power Line Trimmers

- Read the operator's manual and get proper instructions before operating a trimmer.
- Never operate the trimmer with the guard removed.
- Clear the work area of objects such as sticks, rocks, wire etc., before starting work.
- Clear the work area of people and animals for radius of approximately 35 feet around the operator.
- Always wear eye protection.
- Keep the cutting line or blade away from your feet and legs.
- Position the trimmer away from your body to avoid contact with the muffler or other hot engine parts.
- Move the trimmer in a sweeping motion away from your body.

Clothing and Maintenance

- Wear close-fitting clothes, long pants or slacks, and closed-toe shoes with traction soles. Do not operate any power equipment while barefoot, or when wearing thongs or sandals.
- Loose clothing, scarves, dangling jewelry, and untucked shirt tails can snag on controls or get caught in moving parts.
- Protect your eyes with safety glasses or goggles, and your ears with earplugs.
- Wear gloves to service or adjust equipment, especially when working on the blades.
- When working on equipment with the blade guards removed, take the spark plug and ground the spark plug wire to prevent accidental engine start.

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