

<p>General Issue: 02</p> <p>Lawnmower Safety</p> <p>June, 1995</p>	<h1>Safety</h1> <p>BULLETIN</p>
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Tips for Lawn Mower Safety and Use

A power mower, whether electric or gasoline-powered, will cut grass neatly, easily, and speedily. Its blade will also cut just about anything else that comes in its path such as: hands, feet, power cords, and pets. Each year, more than 50,000 adults and children are treated in hospital emergency rooms for injuries associated with power lawn mowers. A few moments of preparation and precaution can prevent you from becoming a number in that group of statistics.

Major Accident Patterns

The major accident patterns associated with power lawn mowers involve the following:

Contact with the rotating blade: This usually occurs when the victim is clearing the discharge chute of grass clippings, especially when grass is wet, or when the victim adjusts the machine without turning it off, or when the machine hits an obstacle such as a rock and the victim's foot slips under the housing.

Propelled objects: Wire, rocks, and twigs can be shot out either through the discharge chute or from under the housing, injuring an innocent bystander or family pet.

Overturning: This occurs primarily with riding mowers which are used on steep slopes or embankments. When the machine overturns, the victim can come in contact with the blades or sustain injuries from the fall itself.

Mower running over victims: This often occurs when a riding mower or a garden tractor is being driven in reverse. In most instances, the victims are young children who are unknown to the operator of the mower and who are in the vicinity of the mower. Another frequent accident pattern occurs when the operator pulls the mower backward over his/her own foot.

Rules of Use

Everyone planning to use a power mower must be aware of the dangers involved and take at least the following precautions:

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1. Rake away wire, cans, rocks, twigs, and other debris before starting the mower. A power lawn mower's blades can reach speeds in excess of 200 miles per hour and can throw objects great distances.
2. Never mow a wet lawn. First, it is easier for the operator to slip and fall in wet grass, increasing the chance for injury. Secondly, the wet grass clogs the blade and exhaust chute, tempting the unwary operator into putting his/her hand or a tool into the area of the rapidly revolving blade.

WARNING !!

This machine may create hazardous noise levels. Ear plugs or ear muffs should be worn by the operator!!

3. Always turn off the machine and disconnect the spark plug when it needs adjustment or the chute is to be cleared. Without this precaution, the engine could self-start.
4. Always turn off an unattended mower. A running power mower is a great temptation for a child to attempt to operate it.
5. Never permit young children to operate a power lawn mower. Keep them, as well as pets, from the area which is being mowed.
6. Wear sturdy shoes and close-fitting slacks which will not become entangled with any part of the mower. **Never** operate the mower **barefooted**.
7. Mow across the slope when using a "hand-guided" mower. However a riding mower must be driven up and down the slopes for stability.
8. Wait several minutes after shutting down a mower to be sure that a "backfire" will not occur and cause the blades to revolve.
9. Never refuel a mower while it is running or while the engine is hot. Take time to bag clippings or some other chore while the engine is cooling.
10. Never refuel a mower indoors, since unseen vapors may be ignited by a spark. Such activity can not only cause personal injury but also property damage.
11. Always start a mower outdoors, not in a garage, shed, or basement where carbon monoxide fumes can collect.
12. Don't smoke around the mower because the gasoline fumes may ignite.
13. Keep all children, no matter what age, away from the mower machine and the gasoline.

NOTE!!

Give complete undivided attention to the job at hand!

14. Always keep any type of mower flat on the ground while it is running.
15. Always push a mower AWAY from the operator, never pull it toward feet or other parts of the body.

NOTE!!

All power lawn mower operators MUST be instructed to shut down their machines when an unusual vibration is noticed during operation. The machine should not be operated until necessary repairs have been made by experienced mechanics.

16. Operators should be briefed before each grass cutting operation on the dangers of the machine and the “Do’s” and “Don’ts” of operating a power lawn mower.
17. Blades should be checked before the start of each cutting season to insure they are sharp enough to do the grass cutting job.
18. Gasoline and other inflammable supplies must be kept in appropriately marked containers and stored in “childproof” places that are well ventilated so that fumes will be dissipated into the atmosphere.
19. Before a machine is turned on to start cutting, the blade area and the chute should be checked for obstructions.

WARNING !!

Keep hands and feet from under the machine at all times. Never leave engine running when away from it. Always wear proper clothing and safety equipment. A competent service person should make all needed adjustments and repairs.

Guidelines for Electric Mower Use

When using an electric mower, be very careful not to run over the cord or entangle it in the blades. If this does happen, leave the mower immediately and disconnect the cord from the power outlet before attempting to disentangle the cord.

Use electric mowers only in dry weather, never in the rain or when it is wet.

When buying and maintaining a mower, making certain that proper safety devices are included on a mower is a very important consideration when one is purchased.

Complete operating instructions should come with the mower. There should be clearly written Warning Labels on the machine itself, and these labels should not be removed and should be observed by all operators.

**SAFETY FIRST INSTEAD OF SPEED
SHOULD BE THE ORDER OF THE DAY!!**