



Lawn Care Safety

life  beats

Lawn Care Safety

Most homeowners generally do not consider lawn maintenance a dangerous activity - but it can be if you don't approach it with safety in mind.

Lawn Maintenance Incident Facts:

- More than 234,000 people received medical treatment for lawn mower-related injuries in 2012, according to the U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- 1 of 5 deaths involves a child. Most of the deaths to children occurred when a child was in the path of a moving mower.
- Information from around the world suggests similar incident results.

The Bottom Line – *Lawn Maintenance can be dangerous if not done using the right safety precautions.*

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Lawn maintenance activities include such tasks as mowing, edging, pruning, fertilizing and general clean-up.

What are some potential hazards associated with lawn maintenance?

- *Rotating equipment and blades*
- *Sharp edges*
- *Flying debris*
- *Lawn chemicals*
- *Hot environment*
- *Noise*
- *Gasoline*



Safe Lawn Maintenance, like all work, requires good planning and pre-job analysis.

Use the “**Check Signals**” process to conduct a pre-job analysis of your planned lawn maintenance job. Ask Yourself:

- *What could go wrong?*
- *What precautions should I take?*
- *Can I do the job safely?*

Let's look at an example.....



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On a Saturday morning, you are preparing to mow and edge your lawn. Using “Check Signals” pre-task analysis, analyze the potential hazards and develop precautions for a safe job. **Ask:**

What could go wrong?

- *Contact with mower and edger blades – Lacerations/Amputations*
- *Struck by flying objects – Eye/face/body injuries*
- *High noise impact – Hearing loss*
- *A gasoline fire – Burns and fire damage*
- *Heat illness symptoms – Health impact*
- *Children and others could be injured*

What else?



What precautions should I take?

- *Ensure that equipment guards and safety equipment are in place and functioning properly.*
- *Wear proper clothing and PPE – Long pants, sturdy shoes, safety glasses, face shield, hearing protection and gloves.*
- Fuel equipment only when cool. If refueling is necessary, take a break and let the equipment cool.
- Stay hydrated and take frequent breaks to avoid heat related illness.
- Ensure children and others are in a safe location away from work areas, preferably indoors.
- Use proper mowing and edging techniques per equipment manufacturers recommendations.

Are there any other precautions?

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Can I do the job safely?

If you cannot answer yes, re-evaluate your precautions and take the necessary actions!!



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Additional Tips for Safe Lawn Maintenance:

- Always make sure you have read the operating guide for your lawn mower.
- Never run over anything other than grass with your mower.
- If you are using a riding mower, never let anyone else ride on the mower with you.
- Never run your lawn mower while you're on pavement. On the pavement, objects are much more likely to be thrown at very high speeds.
- Always disconnect the spark plug when you work on your mower.
- Never empty the grass-catching bag while the engine is running.
- Always set the wheel height of your mower prior to starting the engine.
- Always shut off the engine before unclogging the discharge shoot.
- Never use your mower for something it is not designed to do.
- Never remove a safety feature from your mower. They are there for a reason.
- Ensure hand tools such as clippers, shears and choppers are in good condition.

Gasoline Safety

- Never store gasoline in the house.
- Always store your gasoline in a container that is clearly marked.
- Never fill the tank on a mower that has been operating and is hot. The gasoline can be ignited by a hot muffler.

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Electrical Equipment Safety

- Never use your electrical power equipment in wet conditions. Wet conditions can cause electrocution.
- Always make sure the power switch is in the OFF position before plugging the device into the outlet.
- Always unplug the cord directly from the outlet. Unplugging the cord by yanking on it could damage the cord or worse, strike someone who is nearby.
- Always make sure your electric cords aren't damaged or frayed.

Clothing Safety

- Never wear baggy clothing while maintaining lawns. Loose clothing can get caught up in the lawn mower controls and other moving parts.
- Always wear eye protection while mowing and trimming.
- Always wear shoes that have good traction while mowing lawns. Use steel-toed boots if possible.

Lawn Chemicals

- Read and follow precautions provided by Safety Data Sheets (SDS).
- Avoid exposure to skin, eyes and nose during and after application.
- After application, store extra chemicals in a secure location that is out of reach of children and pets.
- Use only the recommended amount; more chemical than prescribed will not do a better job.



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Lawn Maintenance Checklist	Yes	No
Have I checked the lawn for debris and obstructions?		
Is all lawn equipment in good working order, (with all safety equipment)?		
Do I have the right clothing, shoes and PPE?		
Is the equipment safe to fuel?		
Have I taken precautions to avoid Heat-Related illness?		
Are others in a safe location?		
Have I made all equipment adjustments?		
Have I read the lawn chemical SDS information and taken precautions?		
Post Job Checklist	Yes	No
Is equipment cooled and stored properly?		
Is gasoline stored in proper containers and in a safe location?		
Are hand tools stored safely?		

!!! Correct all No answers before starting the job !!!

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Lawn maintenance can be a safe and rewarding task if you remember to check signals first!

Check Signals pre-task analysis



WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE?

CAN I DO THE JOB SAFELY?

Focus - Start to Finish

References:

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