

DuPage County Environmental, Safety, Health & Property Loss Control Program

Mower Safety

Purpose: Establish general lawn mower safety precautions.

Allergic reactions: if you have severe allergies (such as insect stings) make sure your Supervisor and co-workers know about the allergy and what to do in event you have an allergic reaction. Those with severe allergies to insect stings should consult with their physician about carrying a prescription medical kit.

PPE: Safety begins with wearing the proper Personal Protective Equipment in this case:

- Wear wrap around shaded safety glasses or goggles as flying debris such as a small pebble can be thrown up into the eyes.
- Hearing protection
- Safety boots
- Work gloves
- Long pants
- Head covering to protect from sun
- Safety vest
- If operating in a dusty area wear a disposable dust mask

Know the machine: All mowers are not alike. Understand the controls, height adjusters etc. If your machine is equipped with a roll bar be sure it is securely in the up position.

1. Before operating read all safety and warning labels. Check the safety guards and devices are in proper working condition. Never operate the mower if the guards are not in place.
2. Inspect before operating AND be certain mower is off, if it has a key remove it from ignition or disconnect spark plug. Then check fluid levels, see if discharge chute is clear, clean debris off radiator screen, remove clippings from engine etc.
3. Never start the mower if attachments are not securely fastened.
4. Only fuel the mower when the engine is cool and never smoke while fueling it.
5. Mow in straight lines. Start by making a perimeter pass of the area to be mowed with the discharge chute or crass catcher to the inside-away from sidewalks, streets etc. A perimeter pass will allow you to make U Turns in the grass, thereby avoiding tire and crass stains on sidewalks.
6. Be careful not to hit items such as bottles, cans, rocks etc. they can be thrown large distances and cause injury or damage to passer by's and vehicles.
7. Avoid saturated ground while mowing.
8. If a person or animal approaches while mowing **STOP** the mower until they pass.
9. Avoid hitting or rubbing mower or its tires against trees, buildings etc. to prevent damage to both.
10. Discharge chute may become clogged. To unclog it **TURN OFF** mower, make sure blades have stopped. Disconnect spark plug or remove key from ignition. Use a tool or pole to dislodge clippings. **NEVER** clear the chute or underside of the mover with your hands or place your feet near the blades.

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11. Be careful on slopes. Always mow up and down slopes-never across slopes. Decrease your speed when mowing down slopes or around sharp corners to help prevent tipping. On level ground make wide gradual turns, avoid sudden stops and turns.
12. Riding mowers equipped with a Safety Roll Bar be sure it is secured in the **UP** position.

Remember if it looks dangerous, it almost certainly is dangerous.