

MAFES Dawg Tracks



June 1, 2009 *Landscape Safety: Operating Edgers Safely*



Drive and walkway edgers are a wonderful invention.

It's hard to remember when we didn't have them. In fact, my first one was a hand-job, and I thought it did a great job (if your back could hold up to it.) Then here comes the gasoline and electric models that were so easy and convenient. But, like all tools and equipment, there are precautions that we need to use to avoid accidents

Following are some tips, if practiced, that will enable us to fully enjoy the use and benefits of automation and decrease the potential for an accident:

BEFORE USING THE EDGER –

- Read the owner's manual thoroughly to get familiar with the controls and how to use the machine responsibly and safely.
- Be sure that you know how to disengage the engine and stop it quickly.
- Do not allow children or inexperienced adults to use an edger without proper instructions. Also, be sure that these folks are physically and mentally capable to operate the machine.
- Always, and carefully, survey the area to be trimmed and edged to be sure that no rocks, sticks or other debris are in the area that can and will become a projectile if hit by the blade of the edger.

- Keep children, pets and bystanders away from the area to be edged.
- Wear the proper protection when edging (this is hard to enforce.) Operators should wear goggles or face shields, ear protection, long pants and long sleeved shirts, safety shoes and gloves.
- Be sure to check the edger before each use for loose blades, loose shroud or other possible repairs.
- Fuel the engine out in the open. Refuel the engine after you allow it to cool down for several minutes.
- If using an electric type, check the wiring and plug before each use.

OPERATING THE EDGER –

- Never operate the edger inside a building because of the carbon dioxide buildup.
- Be sure that the blade is disengaged before starting the engine.
- Hold the edger with both hands in a well balanced but comfortable stance.
- Always keep your hands and feet away from the cutter blade.
- Always keep the discharge away from the direction of kids, pets or bystanders and in locations where ricocheting might cause a problem.
- Store the edger where kids can't reach it.

***SAFETY IS A STATE OF MIND!
ACCIDENTS ARE
AN
ABSENCE
OF MIND!!***