

MAFES Dawg Tracks

November 21, 2011



Safety Tips: Pressure Washer Safety

Pressure washers are a great innovation and are used for a multitude of different projects.

But, like any equipment, they can be harmful if not used correctly. So, it behooves us to make sure that anyone using this machine has read the operator's manual and is extremely familiar with the operation of the equipment...

Following are some safety tips for equipment safety, personal safety and usage safety:

Equipment Safety-

- ✓ Make sure to check the engine oil level each time you use your pressure washer.
- ✓ When changing or adding oil, do not overfill the engine crankcase. Overfilling oil may cause smoking, hard starting, spark plug fouling, and oil saturation of the air filter.
- ✓ Do not run the pressure washer before connecting and turning on the water supply. Failing to do so will result in damage to the pump.
- ✓ Always keep the high-pressure hose connected to both the pump and the spray gun while the system is pressurized.
- ✓ Never refuel a hot or running engine. Wait 2 minutes before refueling.
- ✓ Do not secure the spray gun trigger in the spray position.
- ✓ Never adjust the spray pattern or change a spray while spraying.
- ✓ Using a pressure washer from a ladder, scaffolding, or other unstable position is not recommended. A slip or fall could result from the recoil of the initial spray, or the pressure of the water striking a wall surface.
- ✓ Never attempt to repair a damaged high-pressure hose. If the high-pressure hose is damaged, replace it with a new one.

Personal Safety-

- Always read and follow the operator's manual and all operating instructions.
- Assume a solid stance and firmly grasp the spray gun with both hands to avoid injury in case the gun kicks back before squeezing the spray gun trigger.
- High-pressure spray can cut through skin. Do not spray people or animals, as injury can result.
- Use extreme caution when spraying near power lines, service feeds, and electrical meters.

- It is most important to wear goggles when using a pressure washer or when you're in the vicinity of one in use. The high-pressure spray can cause paint chips or other particles to become airborne.
- The spray gun traps high water pressure, even when the engine/motor is stopped and water is disconnected. Always point the spray gun in a safe direction and squeeze the spray gun trigger to release high pressure - every time the engine/motor stops. Engage the trigger lock when not in use.
- Do not wear open-toed shoes while pressure washing.
- Do not allow children to operate the pressure washer. Do not leave the pressure washer unattended while it is running.
- Keep the nozzle spray away from electrical wiring and windows.

Usage Tips-

- **Use the Right Nozzle** - If you use a nozzle that concentrates too much power, you could accidentally harm the surfaces that you're cleaning. Before using the nozzle on a visible area, experiment with it on an inconspicuous area. Be extra careful when cleaning wood, as it is a porous material and too much pressure can damage it.
- **Use the Right Cleaner** - Most manufacturers have detergents and waxes formulated and approved for their equipment. As an example, Briggs and Stratton engines and machines have B&S Deck Wash, Vehicle/Boat Wash, Heavy-Degreaser or Multi-purpose Wash.
- **Adjust the spray angle** - Cleaning results vary based on how wide you set the spray angle of the nozzle. Experiment to see which angles give you the desired results. The best angle will reduce the time of the project.
- **Houses: From the Ground Up** - It's best and safest to clean a house from the ground up. Starting at the roof on a ladder with the slippery detergents and water can create a hazard and possibly an injury. It's best to have hose extensions and brushes to reach to the top to clean and prep it for a new paint job.
- **Be Safe** - Pressure washers are equipped with safety features designed to reduce pressure buildup. Unloaders and thermal relief valves prevent heat and water pressure from reaching dangerous levels. The oil level indicators ensure that the washer stays properly lubricated.

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Excerpts: www.briggsandstratton.com

5/18/2011