



MAFES Dawg Tracks

April 7, 2014



General Landscape /Horticulture
Hazards Safety Tips



We don't touch on landscaping and horticulture safety often enough. Actually, other subjects in many cases touch indirectly on safety issues that involve these two areas.

Annually approximately 230,000 people are treated in emergency rooms for accidents relating to lawn/garden tools. So, based on these figures, I believe that landscape/horticulture safety is worthy of discussing. Also, we have several off-campus stations involved in different facets of gardening/horticulture in addition to the main campus.

Following are some areas of potential hazards and the injuries that they can cause:

- ✓ **Machinery** – (Graders, Bobcats, back hoes, hole diggers, chainsaws)
Results - Amputation, crushes or cuts, possibly hearing loss from machine noise.
Remediation – Proper training, provide proper personal protective equipment and prohibit non-workers from loitering in the work area.
- ✓ **Electricity** – (Electrical cords and leads used for hand-held equipment)
Results – Electrocution and/or electrical shock
Remediation – Avoid using electrical tools around water or wet areas; ensure that electrical tools are regularly inspected, tested and tagged (use lockout/tagout). Report problems or potential problems to your supervisor and take the tool out of service.
- ✓ **Hazardous Substances & Dangerous Goods** – (Including pesticides, herbicides, fuel for mowers, chainsaws, etc.)
Results - Skin contact, accidental swallowing or splashing can cause nausea, allergic reactions or poisoning. Fumes can cause nausea, dizziness, vomiting or headaches.
Remediation – Provide information to mitigate the problem by referring to the MSDS and/or labels on the container. Mix and dispense chemicals in well-ventilated areas. Use the proper PPE. Double check to make sure that chemicals are not stored in unlabeled containers.
- ✓ **Manual handling** – (Bending, reaching, lifting, and/or pulling)
Results – Body breaks, strains, or sprains.
Remediation – Provide mechanical help (forklifts) use team or “buddy” system for help.
- ✓ **UV radiation** –
Results – Sunburn, cancer
Remediation–Provide proper personal protective Equipment, headgear and sunscreen, provide as much shade as possible. Wear appropriate clothing to minimize UV radiation exposure.

- ✓ **Heat & Cold** –
Results – Heat stress in hot/humid conditions, fatigue, and frostbite in cold, diminished concentration can result in injuries if safety measures aren't practiced.
Remediation – Provide shade where practical, provide rest breaks, provide water and PPE and reschedule work shifts for heat/cold protection where possible. Be aware of weather conditions in advance of actual happening.
- ✓ **Sexual Harassment and/or Workplace Bullying** –
Results – Emotional stress, fear, anxiety, and physical illness.
Remediation – Establish workplace policies against this behavior, provide staff briefings and training and report any concerns immediately.
- ✓ **Slips, Trips, Falls** – (Uneven walking surfaces, slippery walks, loose ground embankments, broken concrete walkways)
Results- Broken bones, bruised body parts, sprains, and strains.
Remediation – Assess the area for potential hazards, remove the potential hazards; repair the holes with fill in material as required, repair broken walkways, eliminate electrical cords and air hoses on the floor or ground, or other obstacles that could potentially cause a problem.

OTHER GENERAL TIPS-

- Proper training in respective areas mentioned above.
- Report unsafe or defective equipment to management.
- Make sure emergency phone numbers are posted in conspicuous locations.
- Make sure fire extinguishers and first aid kits are present and in proper places.
- Periodic rest breaks are strongly recommended in areas of extreme weather conditions.
- Remain focused when inclement weather has been announced as a possibility.
- Protect against infectious bugs, snakes or other dangerous varmints.
- Identify and destroy harmful or noxious plants such as poison ivy.
- Select the right tool for the job and inspect them daily to keep them in good repair.
- When working with tools, and you are in a standing position, make sure you are on level ground with your feet firmly planted and spaced about shoulder width for good balance.

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Excerpts: www.education.vic.gov.au
www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/safety_landscaping
1/16/2014

BE SAFETY SMART
READ THE INSTRUCTIONS
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GOOD HABITS - THE BEST WAY TO STAY OUT OF TROUBLE!!!