



MAFES Dawg Tracks

June 1, 2015



Landscape and Grounds
Maintenance Safety Tips



The time is here for updating and preparing our lawns and grounds for the summer beautification that we all enjoy and like to show off to neighbors, friends and passersby. However, to get the full benefit of these beautification projects, we need to stay focused on the safety aspects so that we can enjoy them and not worry about injuries.

We shall review a few good points of safety for some of the areas of landscaping and maintaining our grounds with some of the equipment used to beautify these areas:

ROTARY MOWERS-

- ✓ Before operating the mower, read and get completely familiar with the owner's manual.
- ✓ Learn the location and function of all the controls, gauges and dials on the mower.
- ✓ Get familiar with the slope capabilities, braking and steering characteristics and the mower clearances.
- ✓ Check the PTO, drive belts, gears and chains to be sure that they are working and are properly adjusted.
- ✓ Check the lighting systems that they are functioning properly.
- ✓ The tractor should be equipped with a Rollover Protective Structure (ROPS) and seatbelt. When the ROPS and seatbelt are in use, statistics have proven that fatal accidents were reduced by 95%.
- ✓ If you will be using public roads for moving to new mowing locations, be sure to have a Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) sign mounted on the back of the mower and that it is clean and legible.
- ✓ Before dismounting the mower, be sure:
 - ~to disengage the PTO and set the brakes.
 - ~that the blades are completely stopped before approaching the mower deck.
- ✓ Check for low overhead power lines, especially if you are using the wing- type mowers, flail or boom-type.
- ✓ Be extra careful when making tight turns that you don't allow the mower to ride up on the rear tires.
- ✓ Some rotary mowers are equipped with the brush guards and safety chains. Be sure that the deck is adjusted so that it isn't riding on the runner shoes to avoid excessive wear.

PERSONNEL SAFETY TIPS-

- ✓ Be sure to keep your hands and feet clean to clean to avoid slipping when mounting the tractor.
- ✓ Keep the wheels set as wide apart as possible for stability.
- ✓ Use your ground speed based on the terrain and density of grass.
- ✓ Check all around your area for pets and bystanders before you start to mow. Clear the area before you start to mow.
- ✓ Remove the key anytime you stop and are dismounting the tractor.
- ✓ Use a stick to unclog the grass chute when needed, never use your hands.
- ✓ **ONE-SEAT-ONE RIDER-ALWAYS IN EFFECT!**

MANUAL (Push mower) POWER MOWER SAFETY TIPS- DO-

- Know the controls and how to stop the mower quickly.
- Check before each mowing to see that all guards and shields are intact and functioning properly.
- Always mow in the forward direction. Be extra careful when mowing in rough terrain, around bushes and trees.
- Performing any type of maintenance, be sure to kill the engine and wait for the blades to quit turning.
- Watch for rocks and other debris when mowing. Move out all pets, debris and children before you start to mow.

DON'T-

- Pull the mower backwards (toward your feet).
- Touch hot parts or pour cold water in the engine.
- Refuel the engine when it is hot.
- Make any machine or engine adjustments with the engine running.
- Leave an attended mower running and allow the blades to turn when crossing a graveled area.
- Unclog the grass chute or remove the grass with the engine running.

LAWNCARE APPLIANCES (Blower & Trimmer) Safety-

Know how to operate the equipment-

- ✓ Read and thoroughly understand the owner's manual.
- ✓ Know the controls and all of their functions.
- ✓ Follow all the safety instructions.

Dress Correctly-

- ✓ Wear long pants and close fitting clothes.
- ✓ Wear sturdy shoes or boots.
- ✓ Don't wear jewelry or clothing that could get caught in moving parts.
- ✓ Wear work gloves, goggles and ear plugs when working with the trimmer and leaf blower.
- ✓ If you wear long hair, pull it back and tie it off to prevent getting it caught in moving parts of the appliances.

Handle Gas Carefully-

- ✓ Don't spill when you fill.
- ✓ Fill the tank before you start when the engine is cold.
- ✓ Do not smoke around gas.
- ✓ Start the engine on firm ground with solid footing.

Clear the area-

- ✓ Check for rocks, branches and other debris before you start to work. Keep bystanders out of the area where you are working.

Operate carefully and follow all safety procedures-

- ✓ Turn off engine, disconnect the sparkplug wire before moving to another location. Do not leave an appliance running and unattended.

SAFETY RULES ARE YOUR BEST TOOLS!



**INVEST IN TOMORROW-
PRACTICE SAFETY TODAY!!**