



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MS AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY
EXPERIMENT STATION

MAFES DAWG TRACKS

It is summertime! With grass growing fast and flowers and vegetables in full bloom, yard and other outside work time is also growing. So, keep in mind a few points to stay safe.

Hand Tools:

- ✓ Use lighter weight tools as much as possible.
- ✓ Handles with cylindrical handle shapes and contoured to provide equal pressure along the arch of the palm. And handles constructed of hard, compressed rubber minimize friction.
- ✓ Handles with different lengths can make a difference in the fatigue factor. Shorter handles offer more control, but longer handles offer more power & leverage, and these are the best for jobs requiring full body motion.
- ✓ Avoid using tools that require awkward body positioning.

Work Smart:

- ✓ When doing groundwork, use knee pads, cushions, or bucket seats to relieve the stress on your knees.
- ✓ Use hose reels instead of dragging long hoses around the yard/garden.
- ✓ Use a cart to haul plants or heavier objects, and to help pick up sticks, instead of carrying them.
- ✓ If people or animals approach the area while mowing, stop & turn the blades off until they pass by. Any object that is run over with a lawn mower while the blades are engaged will become a projectile. This object can travel up to 200 miles per hour after leaving the discharge chute. For this reason, it is important to keep the discharge chute deflector down and in good condition.

Dress properly for the work project that you're about to begin, including the proper **personnel protective equipment:**

There are positives and negatives to wearing **gloves**. It is obvious that gloves will protect you from blisters and abrasions and minimize the effects of vibrations. The negative aspects of gloves include that they reduce hand strength and are difficult to use when operating equipment. Consider these points:

- ✓ Wear the thinnest gloves for your required task. Gloves should cover the smallest area of hands as possible without being restrictive.
- ✓ Gloves should be made from fabrics suitable for the type of work that you're engaged in. Chemical resistant gloves are not necessary for working in flowerbeds- nor would leather or cotton be suitable or necessary for spraying pesticides.

The most important piece of personal protective equipment, while mowing or using a weed trimmer, is **safety glasses**. A blade of grass in your eye will hurt and maybe scratch it; but a rock, piece of stick, or other projectile can cause permanent irreversible eye damage.

While operating most trimmers or mowers for an hour or so once a week will not cause hearing loss, if you do this daily (or have an unusually loud mower, which requires several hours of operation) **hearing protection** may be necessary.

Wear a **hat and sunscreen** when outside for any length of time to prevent sunburns.

For more info contact:

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Sources:

www.cdc.org/NASD/11/14/2016

<http://articles.extension.org/pages/67563/riding-lawnmower-safety>