

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY	<i>Policy Sponsor:</i> Assistant Vice President Facilities Management	<i>Approval Date:</i> January 2010
	<i>Responsible Unit:</i> Facilities Management	<i>Revisions:</i>
Facilities Management Hedge Trimmers Safe Work Instructions		
Service: Environmental Services	Shop: Grounds and Horticultural	
Hazards Identified: Sharp objects, sprains, strains, heat, exposure to the sun, back injuries, hitting head, being hit by items, slippery conditions, tripping hazards, striking solid or fixed objects,		
Personal Protective Equipment Required: Safety boots, safety gloves, hard hat, safety goggles or safety glasses with side shields or a face shield or face screen, hearing protection, long trousers		
Training Required: Before using this equipment employees must be trained by a competent person in its proper use and care. Employees must also be trained in the proper use and maintenance of all required PPE before operating this equipment.		

These safe work practices must be followed at all times and are to be reviewed annually.

1. Ensure that you understand the information contained in the Owner's Manual for the hedge trimmer that you are using.
2. Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations regarding operation and maintenance.
3. Ensure that you are wearing all required PPE.
4. Use safety gloves that are designed to reduce the vibration from the trimmer.

5. Do not operate this equipment if you are tired or in poor physical condition.
6. Never operate this equipment if your vision, dexterity or judgment are impaired by medications, alcohol or drugs.
7. Hold the trimmer with a firm grip. Do not squeeze the handles with excessive pressure.
8. Always wear tough clothing that fits snugly without restricting arm and body movement.
9. Never modify or alter the hedge trimmer in any way.
10. Use only manufacturer approved parts.
11. Ensure correct carburetor setting so that blades don't move when the trimmer is idling.
12. Before starting work check out the work area, and the hedge or shrub to be trimmed, in order to identify any hazards in the area.
13. Always take greater care in slippery conditions, on slopes, uneven ground, around roots and stumps, etc.
14. Do NOT cut anything other than hedges and shrubs.
15. Always hold the trimmer firmly with both hands and without excessive pressure.
16. The operators' right hand should always grip the rear handle.
17. Do not, under any circumstances try to operate this equipment with one hand.
18. Avoid coming in contact with the ground.
19. If the trimmer gets jammed in thick wood shut it off immediately.
20. Never work from a ladder or up in tree or any other unstable location.
21. Never reach above shoulder height to use the trimmer.
22. Always stop the trimmer engine and wait for the blades to stop before working on this equipment.

Starting

1. Never allow anyone to assist you in starting the trimmer.
2. DO NOT “drop start” the trimmer.
3. Always put the trimmer on firm ground or other solid surface to start.
4. Ensure that your footing is good and that you are balanced in your stance.
5. Ensure that the starter lock is engaged.
6. Do not wrap the starter cord around your.
7. Do not allow the starter cord to snap back in place, guide it so it rewinds properly.

Transporting the Trimmer

1. Always engage the starting lock before transporting.
2. Always switch the engine off and cover the blades with the scabbard before transporting long distances.
3. If transporting in a vehicle or trailer ensure the trimmer is secured in place to avoid fuel spilling or damage to the equipment.
4. When walking any distance hold the trimmer by the front handle in an upright position with the blade behind you.
5. Never carrying or transport the trimmer with the blades running.
6. Always ensure that the throttle trigger, throttle trigger interlock, stop switch, cutting blades and stop switch are working properly before use.
7. Do not use the trimmer if the cutter blades are dull or damaged or if the trimmer engine seems to be malfunctioning in any way.
8. Always tag the trimmer with a “DO NOT USE” sign indicating what the problem is the trimmer should not be use. Report the problem to your supervisor immediately.
9. Spray the blades with manufacturer approved resin solvent before starting to work.

Fueling

1. Use extreme caution when handling gasoline or fuel mixtures.
2. Always fuel the trimmer in a well ventilated area or outdoors.
3. Keep all sources of ignition away from the fueling area.
4. Remove the gas tank filler cap slowly to allow any pressure build up in the tank to release slowly.
5. Never remove the filler cap while the engine is running.
6. Refuel over a drip pan or bare ground.
7. Check for fuel leaks (during fueling and operation) and do not run engine until leak has been repaired.
8. Clean up any spilled gas immediately.
9. Move at least 10 feet away from the fueling area before starting the trimmer.