

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY Facilities Management Push Lawn Mowers Safe Work Instructions	<i>Policy Sponsor:</i> Assistant Vice President Facilities Management	<i>Approval Date:</i> January 2010
	<i>Responsible Unit:</i> Facilities Management	<i>Revisions:</i>
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		
Personal Protective Equipment Required: Safety boots, safety gloves, hard hat, eye and face protection, hearing protection		
Training Required: Before using this equipment employees must be trained by a competent person in its proper use and care and in the proper use, care and storage of all required PPE.		

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

1. Only properly qualified employees are to operate this equipment.
2. The required personal protective equipment must be used at all times while the equipment is being operated.
3. Always read and follow the manufacturer's operating manual, particularly information about start-up, operation, shut-down and maintenance.
4. Know the location of all controls and how to operate them. Know how to stop the equipment quickly.
5. Check all fluid levels, air filters, etc. before use.
6. Ensure the blades are sharp, properly balanced and free from obstruction, rotating freely and in proper operating order before start up.
7. Always check to be sure that automatic shut-offs work properly.

8. Check to ensure all nuts and other fasteners are tight and not showing wear.
9. Remove the spark plug when checking under the mower to prevent an accidental start.
10. Always walk; NEVER run when using a push mower.
11. Do not operate the mower unless all guards and shields are in place.
12. Always check the area to be mowed for debris that could be ejected, from under the carriage, by the blades.
13. Always clean up items that could be picked up by the mower blades.
14. Make sure that there aren't any other employees, or other persons, in the area that could be hurt by objects ejected by the mower.
15. Do not put hands or feet near or under the mower.
16. Keep clear of the discharge opening at all times when the mower is operating.
17. While mowing always watch for hidden hazards such as roots, holes, edges of concrete walkways, drain tiles, insect nests, etc.
18. Do not aim mower discharge towards other people.
19. Do not aim discharge at buildings etc. (Items in discharge may bounce back at you.)
20. Turn mower off when crossing surfaces covered with gravel .
21. Move slowly into areas of tall heavy grass to avoid choking the mower or stalling the engine.
22. Set the mower at the highest level when working over rough terrain.
23. Do not make wheel adjustments or reach under the mower while the engine is running.
24. Do not operate this equipment in a confined space without proper and adequate ventilation.
25. Never leave a mower unattended with the engine running.

26. Be aware of low hanging tree branches.
27. Never attempt to remove the grass catcher (if so equipped) or unclog chutes when the mower engine is running.
28. Avoid extreme slipping hazards by always assessing whether an area is to wet to mow.
29. Always mow across slopes to ensure you have the best footing and not up and down the slope which creates a greater risk of slipping.
30. Never attempt to re-fuel a mower with the engine running.
31. Never touch the engine area, for any reason, while the engine is still hot.
32. Always stay behind the handle and push the lawn mower when mowing.
33. Never pull the mower when mowing unless it is absolutely necessary.
34. Always look down and behind you before starting to pull the mower and continue to do so while mowing.
35. Do not operate the mower while under the influence of drugs, alcohol or medications.
36. Turn the mower off if it begins to vibrate abnormally.
37. Always turn the mower off if it is to be transported or pushed/pulled to another location, especially over gravel.
38. Ask for assistance to load or unload the mower from vehicles or trailers not equipped with a ramp.

Handling Gasoline

1. Always ensure that there are no sources of ignition in the fueling area.
2. Only use approved containers for storing or transporting gasoline.
3. Never remove the gas cap or start to add fuel if the mower is running or if it hasn't cooled off.
4. Only refuel outdoors or in well ventilated areas.
5. Never fill fuel containers on a truck or trailer bed with a plastic liner

6. Always place gas containers on the ground.
7. Do not refuel mowers in the back of a truck or trailer, place them on the ground.
8. If using a gasoline dispenser nozzle to fill the tank, keep the nozzle in contact with the rim of the fuel tank opening until fueling is complete.

Electric Mowers

1. Always ensure that you use the proper gauge extension cord for the mower.
2. Only plug the mower into a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter.
3. Never remove the ground prong from the mower plug or the extension cord plug.
4. Plug three prong plugs into three prong outlets.
5. Only use extension cords made for outdoor use.
6. Always match the Amp requirements of the mower with the appropriate gauge wire given the length of the extension cord. (See below)
7. Check power cords for defects before each use. Do not use mowers or extension cords that have been damaged.
8. Marked damaged equipment with a “DO NOT USE” sign.
9. Report the problem to your supervisor immediately. In order to have the equipment repaired.
10. Replace damaged or worn extension cords.

Nameplate Amps On Equipment	Cord Length in Feet			
	25 ft.	50 ft.	100 ft.	150 ft.
0 – 6	18	16	16	14
6 –10	18	16	14	12
10 –12	16	16	14	12
12 –16	14	12	Not Recommended	Not Recommended