

Critical Days of Summer Safety Campaign 2020



Week 9 of 16

Landscaping and Home Tools

Roughly 250,000 people in the U.S. are treated for lawnmower-related injuries every year. Don't become a statistic!

Mowers and Trimmers

- Read and follow directions in the equipment operator's manual. Pay attention to safety instructions in the manual and to warning labels you see on the equipment.
- Do not operate machinery if you are tired or have taken drugs or alcohol.
- Wear long pants, and sturdy, non-slip boots to protect your legs and feet. Never wear sandals, which expose your feet, or tennis shoes, which can easily be severed if caught under the mower deck or in the trimmer's cutting swath.
- Safety glasses should be worn at all times. A face shield should be used, in addition to safety glasses, when operating a string/brush trimmer and other times when your face could be hit by debris.
- Hearing protection should be worn when mowing or trimming as these are often loud enough to cause hearing loss.
- Children should be at least 12 years old before operating a lawn mower.
- Pick up stones, toys, and debris from lawn before mowing.
- Always start the mower outdoors.
- Shut off the mower and wait at least five minutes before refueling. Always refuel outdoors. Use a funnel or non-spill nozzle to minimize spills. Wipe up any spill immediately.
- Store fuel in ventilated area away from direct sunlight and open flame.



Pre-Start Checks

- Tighten loose belts and replace belts if any ply separation or cracks are visible.
- Make sure the blade is secure, balanced and covered to prevent injury. Protect your hands with heavy-duty gloves when inspecting blades.
- Check the mower deck and chute for accumulations of grass clippings, leaves, grease and other debris.
- Check that the operator presence control is working properly.
- Make sure all guards and discharge chutes as well as any attachments are mounted and fastened correctly.
- On trimmers, ensure the shield covering the string/blade is in place and secured.

A rock shot from a lawnmower can have the same speed as a bullet shot from a .357 magnum handgun.

Lessons Learned

Learn from those who have gone before you. Following are samples of mishap narratives from the Naval Safety Center.

A Sailor was performing yard work at his residence. At some point during the work, he fainted and fell. The Sailor was reportedly unconscious for about one minute. He drove himself to the local naval hospital and was admitted for five hours and diagnosed with extreme dehydration and a fractured rib sustained during the fall. This Sailor was fortunate that he came to in short order. While driving himself to the hospital may not have been the best decision (*we're glad he didn't faint behind the wheel*), he fully recovered with no lost workdays or light duty. — *Unlike the familiar television ad, we prefer the saying, "Stay **hydrated** my friends." Heat exhaustion can creep up on you quickly, so stay hydrated with water and perhaps an occasional electrolyte drink (but mostly water).*



After work, a Sailor decided to go home to complete some unfinished yard work before it got dark outside.



Using his weed whacker and rushing to get the job completed before dark, an object flew into the Sailor's eye, causing eye irritation. The cause? (*We'll give you one guess*) He wasn't wearing eye protection. That oversight (*vision pun not intended*) earned our weed-whacking Sailor a trip to the emergency room to remove the debris and four days of light duty. — *Wear your "eye pro," dude (that's "eye protection," for those over 40) in your backyard just like you do at work.*

A Marine was cutting the grass and, while attempting to clear a jam in the mower, severely cut four fingers on his right hand. The Marine had let go of the shutoff handle, but the cable became stuck, and the mower didn't shut off. Not hearing the sound of the engine due to wearing his hearing protection (*those must've been some good earmuffs*), the Marine reached under the (*still running*) mower. On the positive side, A) he was wearing PPE and, B) he didn't knowingly reach under a running mower. On the negative side, the mower didn't care. This mishap still bit our unfortunate Marine because he didn't verify the mower was fully stopped before reaching under it. He was flown to a medical center where he required extensive surgery on his hand. The additional cost: One day in the hospital, one lost workday, and 30 days on light duty. — *Beware the "blue threat." It can be lurking in your own backyard.*

According to the Consumer Products Safety Commission, more than 400,000 people suffer power tool injuries each year in the U.S. Of those injured, more than 200 die.

Power Tool Safety

- Keep cords and hoses away from heat, oil, and sharp edges. Never carry a tool by the cord or hose. Do not hold fingers on the switch button while carrying a plugged-in tool.
- Use a GFCI protected outlet. Disconnect tools when not using them, before servicing and cleaning them, and when changing accessories such as blades, bits, and cutters. Never yank the cord or the hose to disconnect it from the receptacle.
- Maintain tools with care; keep them sharp and clean for best performance. Follow instructions in the user's manual for lubricating and changing accessories.
- Make sure all guards are securely attached before using the tool
- Keep all people not involved with the work at a safe distance from the work area.
- Secure work with clamps or a vise, freeing both hands to operate the tool.
- Be sure to keep good footing and maintain good balance when operating power tools.
- Wear proper apparel for the task. Loose clothing, ties, or jewelry can become caught in moving parts.
- Safety glasses should be worn at all times.

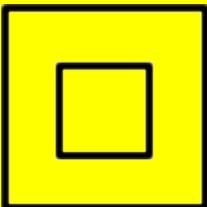


Hand Tool Safety

Hand tools are tools that are powered manually. Hand tools include anything from axes to wrenches. The greatest hazards posed by hand tools result from misuse and improper maintenance.

Some examples include the following:

- If a chisel is used as a screwdriver, the tip of the chisel may break and fly off, hitting the user or other bystanders.
- If a wooden handle on a tool, such as a hammer or an axe, is loose, splintered, or cracked, the head of the tool may fly off and strike the user or other bystanders.
- If the jaws of a wrench are sprung, the wrench might slip.
- If impact tools such as chisels, wedges, or drift pins have mushroomed heads, the heads might shatter on impact, sending sharp fragments flying toward the user or bystanders.



Symbol for double insulation

Electric tools must be grounded or double-insulated. If the plug on the tool doesn't have a grounding prong, look for this symbol on the label. If it lacks a grounding prong and doesn't have this mark, it is not safe to use.



Are all prongs intact?



Questions? Contact the MCAS Iwakuni Station Safety Center.