

LAWNMOWER SAFETY

Every year many people are injured or maimed due to lawnmower accidents. Injuries consist of burns, cuts, being struck by flying objects, and electrocution. Most of these accidents are preventable. Mower operators should follow the safety precautions found in the owner's manual. Following simple safety steps prevents most mower accidents.

Before mowing the lawn:

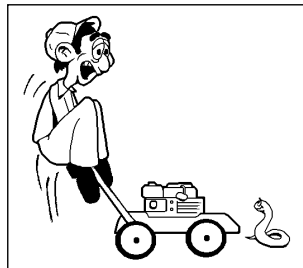
* Make sure the mower is in good working order. If it is hard to start, take it to a mower shop and have it tuned-up or fixed. If the mower is Army-owned, contact your DPW for tune-ups and repairs.

* Check to make sure the cutting blade is sharp and not damaged. Damaged blades can come out of balance and be slung from the mower.

* Disconnect the spark plug before placing hands or any part of the body under the mower or before turning it up to look under it.

* If the blade or grass chute needs to be cleared, stop the mower engine. Never adjust, clear obstructions, or place any part of your body under a running mower.

Check the gas and oil. If



the gasoline is left over from last summer and you didn't use a fuel stabilizer, it will need to be changed.

* Make sure the emergency stop or shut off switch is working and not damaged. Never tape the shut off handle down so you can run the mower without holding it. This is a highly dangerous practice!

* Check the wheels and make sure they roll easily and will not come loose while

mowing. They may need lubrication.

* Check the throttle for free travel through its full range of movement. Adjust, or have it adjusted, if needed.

* Make sure that the guards that prevent objects from flying out from under the blade area are in place. If missing or damaged, **DON'T USE THE MOWER!**

* Make any additional checks and services found in the operator's manual.



**BE SMART FROM
THE START**

* Check the area that you plan to cut. Pick-up rocks, sticks, glass, or other debris. These items become missiles when struck by the mower blade. Rocks and other items have been known to come from under the blade area with such force that they have the power of a rifle bullet.

* Dress properly for the job at hand. Wear leather top shoes or boots. Canvas or cloth top shoes afford little if any protection. Long pants are a necessity. Eye protection and hearing protection should be worn. These items are required when operating a mower while on duty and it is a smart thing to do even at home.

* Make sure the grass is dry. Wet or damp grass can damage the mower or cause an accident during mowing.

**BE READY
BY HAVING
ALL THE
NECESSARY
EQUIPMENT
HANDY**



Let the cutting begin

* Start the mower in a safe area, away from children and other people.

* Make sure that children and other people are a safe distance from the area you are cutting. Never allow children or young teenagers to operate lawnmowers.

* When cutting hills or slopes, cut across the slope and not up and down the slope. Slopes that are steeper than 10% should not be cut by a power mower. The chance of slipping is too great and if you slip you can be run over or slide under the mower.

* If you need to add more gasoline, stop the mower and let it cool for 20 minutes or longer. The hot engine could ignite the gasoline fumes or any gasoline that might be spilled.

* Empty any grass catcher bag or device often. The weight of the grass could cause the mower to overturn or make it difficult to operate.

Cleaning up

Allow the mower to cool for at least 20 minutes. This is a good time to rake or clean up other areas of the yard.

* After disconnecting the spark plug wire, clean off any build up of dirt or grass from the mower. It only gets harder to do later.

* Once the mower is cooled, fill the oil and gasoline levels to the recommended marks.

* Make sure that you close the lid tightly on the gas can before you put it away. Never store gasoline or other flammables in a storage shed that is connected to or close to the house.

* Service the mower as if preparing for cutting grass. Any problems found while you were cutting the grass should be fixed now or as soon as possible.

Remember -- taking time to do the job right and safely will save time and make the job go faster!