

MAFES Dawg Tracks



May 12, 2008

General Mower Safety



University wide, we have been very fortunate in that we haven't had any earth shaking mower accidents from mowers. Mowers, by their very nature, can create havoc if precautions aren't taken to stay focused - the results can be ugly. Serious accidents can be caused from small push mowers to the large tractor mowers if we aren't careful.

If we follow good safety practices, use the proper protective equipment and keep our machines in good repair, these items will help to reduce the risk of an accident and will enhance the safety of the operator.

MOWER HAZARDS -

Blade – The blade is the main source of danger in any mower. Obviously, we want the blade to be sharp and it must turn at a high speed. At the same time, the blade and speed can be a terrible hazard if we allow our feet or hands to accidentally get under the blade platform.

Paths of Cutting – Using push mowers, we should always mow across the slope. This will protect our feet, if we happen to slip and also will enable us to be able to get out of the way, so that the mower won't run over us on a down slope. Pulling a push mower up a slope can cause problems if we slip and get our foot under the mower.

Thrown objects – The tip of the blades of a mower can turn as fast approximately 200 mph. If a rock, piece of metal, or another type of hard material is thrown from the blade of a mower and strikes an individual or small animal, the result can be serious as a critical injury or possibly death.

Carbon Monoxide poisoning – There is also a little thought of danger in carbon monoxide poisoning. If the engine is started and allowed to run in an enclosed area, the danger of carbon monoxide poisoning exists.

SAFE PRACTICES -

- **Prepare the lawn/field for mowing** – I'm the worst at this practice. Each time that we get ready to mow, we should look to be sure that there aren't any obstacles in the area. Regardless of where you are, it's hard to know whether a dog has dug up an article of the kids or if someone in the neighborhood has planted something new. We should especially look each time if we have tall weeds or bushes that might hide new obstacles.
- **Handle fuel with care** – Always allow the mower to cool down before refueling. A hot muffler can ignite gasoline vapors rapidly. Any gasoline spill should be cleaned up immediately. Refuel outdoors and when buying fuel, always fill the portable tank on the ground or the pump island, never in the bed of your pickup or the floor of your SUV. **DO NOT SMOKE WHILE FUELING OR REFUELING.**
- **Wear appropriate Clothing** – Always wear shoes or boots with sturdy non-slip soles and heels. Refrain from tennis or cloth types of shoes. I don't do this but should - wear long pants to protect you from thrown objects. Tight or close fitting clothes will give you protection from getting into moving parts.
- **Use the Right type of mower for the job** – Know the job that you have planned to do and use the right mower. Don't attempt to cut your pasture with a push mower or your yard with a tractor mower (unless you have a large yard.) It is also good to use heavyduty blades for extra protection.

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Excerpts: www.cdc.gov/nasd

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**THOSE WHO WORK IN THE SAFEST
WAY-**

**LIVE TO SEE ANOTHER DAY!
LOOK SHARP - DON'T GET CUT!**