

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Safety Tips: Pressure Water Safety



MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY

Pressure washers are a great invention and serve many useful purposes, especially in an agriculture climate where a lot of cleaning is needed. As in any type of equipment, misuse can result in injuries to the user or operator. The U.S. Consumer Product Commission (USCPC) reports that a 53-year-old man was electrocuted because a washer was improperly grounded. They also reiterate that a user can receive a fatal shock, if the power cord connectors become wet or an internal short exists. At least 13 fatalities have been reported since the advent of the pressure washer.

Since pressure washers are used at most agricultural settings and this is the time of the year that they are put to good use, I believe a review of the safety tips for their use would be of benefit to new workers, as well as a refresher for the experienced ones.

Operational Safety-

- Read the owner's manual and the engine manual entirely before operating the washer.
- Make sure that the unit is on a flat and stable surface and the cleaning area has some slope to it to allow proper drainage.
- Do not run the power washer before connecting and turning on the water supply...failing to do so will result in damage to the pump.
- Always keep the high-pressure hose connected to both the pump and the spray gun while the system is pressurized.
- Never refuel a hot or running engine. It is recommended that you wait at least two minutes before refueling.
- Make sure to check the engine oil level each time you use the washer.
- When adding or changing oil, be careful not to overfill the crankcase. Overfilling will cause smoking, hard starting, spark plug fouling and oil saturation in the air filter.

- It is recommended to never use pressure from a ladder, scaffold, or any unstable position. A slip or fall could result from the recoil of the initial spray.
- Do not attempt to repair a high-pressure hose. If it is damaged, replace it with a new one.
- Do not adjust the spray pattern or change a spray tip while spraying.
- Do not secure the spray gun trigger in the spray position.
- Always keep the high pressure hose connected to the pump and spray gun while the system is pressurized

Usage Safety-

- Assume a solid stance and firmly grasp the spray gun with both hands to avoid an injury if the gun kicks back.
- Use extreme caution with working close to power lines, service feeds and electric meters.
- Keep the nozzle away from electric lines and windows.

Personal Safety Tips-

- Refrain from aiming the nozzle at animals or people. The high pressure stream of water can pierce the skin and its underlying layer causing serious injury.
- Do not allow kids to operate the pressure washer.
- Do not leave the washer unattended.
- Do not wear open-toed shoes while using the washer.
- Most importantly, always wear eye protection when using a pressure washer or when you're in the vicinity of one in use.
- Always squeeze the trigger to relieve the pressure in the gun, hose and pump.

Ted Gordon -Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control Mgr.
MAFES / MSU-ES (662) 566-2201

Excerpts: www.briggsandstratton.com/safety

**WORKING SAFELY EACH DAY
WILL KEEP
THE DOCTOR AWAY**

Dare to be Aware!!