

Safe Work Procedure: Using a Push Lawn Mower

Department/Area:	Approved by:	Date Created:	Review/Revision Date:
Maintenance/Custodial	Workplace Safety and Health Committee	Nov. 15, 2023	Annually

Potential Hazard	Risk level
Awkward postures from leaning forward and twisting around corners	Medium
Forceful exertions to push over rough terrain or thick grass	Low
Vibration if using for long periods	Low
Noise	High
Rotating blades could cause severe cuts and can throw debris	High
Fire risk if refueling when hot	High
Heat stress if working in hot environments	Medium

Risk control devices, personal protective equipment, and other safety considerations	Training/Reference info
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing protection • Wear approved footwear and long pants • Wear lightweight, light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lift/manual materials handling training • Operators manual • Heat stress awareness • On-the-Job training

Note: Common signs and symptoms of a musculoskeletal injury (MSI) can include pain, burning, swelling, stiffness, numbness/tingling, and/or loss of movement or strength in a body part. Report these to your supervisor.

The direct supervisor must ensure that employees who report to him/her are trained and follow this safe work procedure.

Steps to complete this task safely:

- Ensure all shields and guards, such as the rear drag shield, including discharge deflector, are in place and working properly.
- Avoid unnecessary engine idling in enclosed spaces, such as sheds or garages.
- Avoid mowing areas close to where people are present.
- Make best efforts to clear the area to be mowed of any debris that could be thrown from the blades. Watch for hidden hazards such as holes, roots, drain pipes or insect nests. Use caution around low-hanging branches and shrubs.

- Only reach under the machine when the machine is turned off. Disconnect the spark plug wire before performing maintenance.
- Do not touch hot motor parts or spray cold water on a hot engine.
- Do not make wheel height adjustments, unclog chute, remove grass catcher or refuel while the engine is running.
- Do not leave a running mower unattended.
- Refuel in a well-ventilated area and allow the engine to cool at least 10 minutes, or as per operating manual, prior to refueling.
- Take frequent breaks and drink lots of water to hydrate the body.
- Do not work alone. Always inform your supervisor or colleague before you start working.

When leaving the machine:

- Disengage power to the blade.
- Stop the engine.
- Remove the key and return it to the designated area.

When using a lawn mower in hot weather:

- Take rest breaks and drink frequently. Dehydration may occur before you feel thirsty.
- Work in the shade and away from other heat sources if possible.
- Build up a tolerance to high temperatures.
- Monitor yourself and co-workers.

When in doubt, stop and assess the situation before continuing operation!