

## Powered Equipment Safety

The use of powered equipment, such as riding lawn mowers and hedge trimmers, can be an effective way to work. When used correctly, they can make our work tasks easier, save time, and can even provide an ergonomic benefit. But along with the positives, there are also safety concerns that come with this equipment.

**IF UNSURE ABOUT HOW TO OPERATE A PIECE OF EQUIPMENT, CONSULT YOUR SUPERVISOR BEFORE USE.**

**For all powered equipment, follow these guidelines:**

- ❖ Never attempt to repair powered equipment while it is turned on. Be sure to either unplug it, or otherwise remove the power source to prevent accidental start-up, when making repairs.
- ❖ Never leave powered equipment running, and remove any ignition keys, while it is unattended.
- ❖ Never use equipment while overtired, distracted, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- ❖ Do not refuel with gasoline while the machine is hot. This could lead to explosions or burns.
- ❖ Use protective equipment (gloves, ear and eye protection) and wear tight-fitting clothing that covers the arms and legs. Tie back loose, long hair that could get caught. Wear close-toed shoes.
- ❖ Remove debris that could be kicked up as a projectile by the machinery.
- ❖ Maintain all guards in place and do not tamper with the equipment to override safety features.



### Riding Lawn Mowers

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that approximately 35,000 riding lawn mower injuries were treated each year between 2012 and 2014, and around 90 annual deaths occurred from 2008 to 2010, mainly from machine tip-overs, being thrown from the machine, and being run over. With this in mind, take these precautions to stay safe:

- ❖ Only drive riding mowers on lawns or designated areas. Never use them as transport vehicles or drive them on roads.
- ❖ Never drive with passengers, especially children.
- ❖ Do not allow children to operate powered mowers. The minimum age for operation should be 16.
- ❖ Mow up and down on slopes only, at the same angle of the slope. Do not mow across slopes.
- ❖ Beware of holes, divots, and uneven ground. Do not drive the mower over these areas.

### Power Tools (Leaf Blowers, Hedge Trimmers, Edgers, etc.)

- ❖ Do not aim machinery towards another person, even if it is off. Don't use it to clean yourself off.
- ❖ Monitor string length on trimmers/edgers; the equipment may let out too much string which could strike the operator.
- ❖ Inspect electrical cords before use. Replace cut or damaged cords or tag out the equipment.
- ❖ Do not use in wet conditions or in puddles of water.
- ❖ Avoid holding equipment directly above your head, and avoid reaching out too far with the equipment.