General Safety Practices
- Review the operator's manual for instructions and precautions
- Practice using all the controls and make sure you can stop the machine quickly
- Make sure all guards and safety devices are in place and working properly
- Inspect the machine for loose, broken or damaged parts; tighten bolts or make needed repairs or replacements before using the machine
- Make sure the equipment has a working engine interlock and a deadman control

When Refueling
- Store fuel in a properly marked safety can
- Fill the fuel tank out of doors
- Make sure engine is off and cool
- Do not smoke while handling fuel and keep away from sparks and open flames
- Wipe up any spill immediately

Before Using the Equipment
- Wear close-fitting clothes, sturdy non-slip steel-toed safety shoes or boots, eye protection, ear protection and, in summer, a wide-brimmed hat (no bare feet, sandals, or sneakers)
- Check overhead clearance of electrical wires and other hazards
- Inspect the work area for debris, ditches, potholes, stumps, irrigation valves, etc.; clear removable items and mark the others
- For riding machines, adjust the seat, fasten the seat belt, set the parking brake, place the shift lever in neutral or park, and disengage the power take-off before cranking the engine

When Using the Equipment
- Start the engine out of doors
- Before backing up, look behind you for people or obstructions
- Keep your hands and feet away from moving parts

Hedge Trimmers

What Can Happen
- Cut fingers
- Hearing loss
- Eye injuries
- Back strain
- Hand-arm vibration injury

Choosing a Hedge Trimmer
- When buying a trimmer, choose one with the cutting teeth and guards close enough together that your fingers can’t fit between them
Choose a trimmer that has two handles, including a wide forward-handle high above the cutting blades

Select a trimmer that is lightweight and easy to handle

**Safe Work Guidelines**

**Before Use**
- Sharpen the blades if necessary
- Inspect the shrubbery carefully for hidden wires, posts, or trash

**During Use**
- Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, gloves, eye protection, and ear protection
- If trimming tall shrubbery, stand on a stepladder or another stable surface; Do not stand on an unstable surface such as a chair, extension or straight ladder
- Keep your hands and body away from the blades
- Work slowly and deliberately; plan your cuts before you make them
- Take an occasional rest break to avoid fatigue
- **Do not** operate the trimmer above chest height

**After Use**
- Store the trimmer on a low shelf with the blades locked and turned away from the front of the shelf

**String Trimmers**

**What Can Happen**
- Cuts
- Finger or toe amputations
- Eye injuries
- Hearing loss
- Burns
- Injuries to other people

**Safe Work Guidelines**

**During Use**
- Make sure the machine is in good repair before using it
- Always wear the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE)
  - Safety glasses
  - Face shield
  - Gloves
  - Long sleeves and pants, and
  - Hearing protection
- Wear a harness to reduce the risk of back injury when using gas-powered trimmers
- Shut the machine off before making adjustments
- Make sure that no one is near the work area – when people pass by, stop trimming until they have moved a safe distance away

**Electric String Trimmers**
- Make sure the cord is in good repair
- Disconnect the power source before making manual adjustments
- Do not use the string trimmer if the ground is wet
- Should only be plugged into GFI outlets
Using Landscaping Equipment

Earth Compactors

What Can Happen
- Cut or crushed toes or other body parts
- Hearing loss
- Eye injuries
- Numbness in hands
- White finger disease
- Illness or death from carbon monoxide or nitrous oxide poisoning

Safe Work Guidelines

Before Use
- Only trained operators are allowed to operate compactors
- Fill the fuel tank only up to the ¾ level
- Make sure surface being compacted is stable and will not cave in
- Keep other workers and bystanders away from the work area

During Use
- Use a mechanical lifting device or ask another person to help you lift a compactor; attach safety straps if mechanically lifting a compactor more than 60cm (2ft) off the ground
- Keep your feel clear of the machine
- Grasp the machine lightly but securely; let it – not your back – do the work
- Position your body to prevent contact with the hot parts of the engine

After Use
- Shut off the engine and disconnect the spark plug wire before making adjustments or repairs (except a carburetor adjustment), and before leaving the compactor unattended
- Store a jumping-jack type of compactor upright

Power Tillers

What Can Happen
- Cuts
- Amputation
- Eye injuries
- White finger disease
- Numbness of fingers
- Illness or death from carbon monoxide poisoning

Safe Work Guidelines

Before Use
- Clear the work area of hazards such as wires, stones, bottles, cans, sticks, etc.
- Do not use the tiller near underground utilities, irrigation pipes, trees, shrubs, etc.
- Make sure there are no bystanders in the working area
- Before starting the tiller, make sure the depth regulator is working

During Use
- Keep your hands and feet clear of all moving parts
- If you hit an object, disengage the tiller and stop the engine to inspect for damage; repair any damage before using the machine again
Using Landscaping Equipment

After Use
- when turning or transporting the tiller, disengage the transmission
- when transporting a tiller, drive the machine up secure ramps or ask for help to lift it; tie down the machine securely to prevent it from rolling
- turn the machine off before leaving it unattended

Leaf Blowers

What Can Happen
- Hearing loss
- Eye injuries
- White finger disease
- Numbness in fingers
- Illness or death from carbon monoxide poisoning

Safe Work Guidelines

Before Use
- Note the location of the controls to make stopping the blower easier
- Use a facemask, screen, or safety goggles to protect your eyes from dust and flying objects; wear a dust mask in extremely dusty conditions
- Keep bystanders at least 9m (30 feet) away
- Do not wear ties and clothing with chains or straps while operating a blower
- Do not operate the blower without the tubing
- Do not use the blower to spread or mist chemicals, fertilizers, or other toxic substances
- Do not use the blower while standing on a ladder, tree, rooftop, or other unstable surface

During Use
- Start and run the leaf blower while standing upright and only when out of doors
- Direct the debris away from people, animals, glass, and solid objects that could cause material to ricochet
- If electric, do not use on wet ground and use a GFI

After Use
- Stop the engine and disconnect the spark plug wire before maintaining or repairing the leaf blower

Snow Blowers

What Can Happen
- Cut or crushed toes or other body parts
- Amputation
- Hearing loss
- Eye injuries
- Muscle strain
- Injury to others from flying debris
Using Landscaping Equipment

Safe Work Guidelines

Before Use

- Use only the attachments and accessories approved by the manufacturer
- Make sure all guards and shields are in place
- Check bearings, chains, U-joints, etc. and replace any damaged components
- Keep other people away from starting and operating areas
- Disengage all clutches and shift into neutral before starting the motor
- Check shear bolts frequently for proper tightness
- Adjust the collector housing to clear gravel or crushed rock surfaces
- Ensure that path is free of foreign objects

During Use

- Walk slowly, maintain good footing and hold the handles firmly
- Turn slowly on slopes
- Keep away from discharge opening; direct plume of snow away from buildings and vehicles
- Stop the motor if you strike an object; remove the wire from the spark plug and thoroughly inspect the snow thrower for any damage; make any necessary repairs before further use
- Do not make adjustments or put your hand into the auger housing while the motor is running
- If the unit begins to vibrate more than usual, stop the motor and look for the cause
- Do not operate the machine at high speeds on slippery surfaces
- Never use hands to unclog the snow blower

After Use

- Make sure that the collector and all moving parts have stopped before cleaning, inspecting, or repairing the machine
- Run the machine a few minutes after throwing snow to prevent the collector or impeller from freezing
- Allow the engine to cool before storing the machine inside
- Only fuel when outside and the engine has cooled

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