

## **Landscape Safety Series: Push Mower Safety<sup>1</sup>**

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### **BEFORE MOWING**

- Review the instruction manual if you haven't used the mower for awhile.
  - Be sure that all safety devices are in position and working -- rear shield, grass chute deflector, handle upstops (not on electric models), and "dead man control."
  - Wear close-fitting clothes, sturdy non-slip shoes, eye protection, and hearing protection.
  - Fill the fuel tank out of doors when engine is cold. Wipe up any spills.
  - Do not smoke while fueling the engine.
  - Adjust cutting height and blade condition-- sharpen if necessary (engine must be shut off).
  - If your electric mower isn't labeled "double insulated" never plug into anything but a grounded 3-prong outlet. Use a ground fault interrupter (GFI) for maximum safety.
  - Pick up all debris in the lawn -- anything the mower could pick up and throw.
  - Be sure grass is dry before cutting, to prevent the operator from slipping.
  - Do not allow children or pets near the mowing area.
  
  - Never allow children to operate power mowers. Wait until they are physically and mentally mature enough to handle the job.
- Push the mower forward -- do not pull it.
  - Mow across the slope so if you slip you are less likely to get your feet in the blade.
  - Keep electric cord out of the mowing path.
  - Keep hands and feet clear of the blade housing and the discharge chute.
  - Do not run with push powered mowers.
  - If using a push powered mower be careful to not overdo your work capacity especially on hot days.
  - Take frequent rest breaks especially if the operator is out of condition.
  - Point the discharge chute away from people, pets, buildings, windows, and glass doors.
  - Turn the mower off if you leave it for even a moment.
  - Disconnect the spark plug wire before working on the mower.

### **USING THE MOWER**

- Start the mower outdoors near the area to be mowed.
- Do not push a running mower over gravel, stones, or hard objects such as pipes, rocks, or sidewalks.

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