



# *One Million Snow Throwers Equals One Million-Plus Reasons to Think Safety*

There are a lot of snow throwers in the hands of consumers. In fact, the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) recently announced that shipments topped the one million mark for model year 1995. Furthermore, this riveting statistic shows a 128% increase over 1994. So, with snow thrower popularity on the rise, it's imperative to think about safety when snow is in the forecast.

Here are some important recommendations for all wise snow thrower users to review and follow throughout the snow season:

- Read your owner's manual thoroughly and understand all of the recommended safety procedures before turning on your snow thrower.
- Never allow children to operate equipment.
- Keep the area of operation clear of all people -- particularly small children -- and pets.
- The snow can sometimes hide objects that might clog the chute, or otherwise cause damage. You should clear the area of doormats, sleds, boards, wires and other debris.
- Be careful never to throw snow towards people or cars, and never allow anyone in front of your snow thrower.
- If you have to repair your machine, remove an object, or unclog built up snow from the auger blades or chute, always turn the snow thrower off and wait for all moving parts to come to a complete stop. Disconnect the spark plug wire, or for electrics, disconnect the cord.
- Never put your hands inside the auger or chute -- use a stick to unclog the snow thrower.
- Keep hands and feet away from all moving parts.
- Dress properly for the job. Be sure to wear adequate winter garments and footwear that will improve footing on slippery surfaces. Wear safety glasses, and avoid any loose fitting clothing that could get caught in moving parts. Be careful of long hair.
- Handle gas carefully. Avoid spillage by using non-spill containers with spouts. Fill up before you start, while

the engine is cold. Store gas in a clean, dry, ventilated area, and never near a pilot light, stove, or heat source. Never smoke around gasoline.

- Do not clear snow across the face of slopes. Use extreme caution when changing direction on slopes. Do not attempt to clear steep slopes.
- Never operate the snow thrower without good visibility or light. Always be sure of your footing and keep a firm hold on the handles. Walk -- never run.

Snow can be fun for everyone, and these words to the wise can help you keep it safely in its place (off your walk and driveway).