



## Snowblower safety pointers

- Some days it feels like last winter just ended! However, the white stuff will be back with us before long. It's a good idea to prepare now for clearing up the first real snowstorm of the season. Attention to the following details should help snowblower operators minimize potential for equipment breakdown or accidental injury.
- Preseason maintenance of snowblowers is important. Make sure all guards and shields are in place. Check bearings, chains, U-joints, etc., and replace any damaged components. Make sure that you have a good supply of shear bolts on hand.
- Remove all foreign objects from laneways and yards that will have to be kept clear. Metal, stones and bits of wood travel much further and faster than snow when projected by a blower. Mark lane edges with posts if there is a significant drop-off.
- Before starting to clear snow, make sure that children and pets are indoors. In fact, no bystanders of any age should be allowed.
- Keep the snowblower's cutting edge tilted up slightly during the first pass. By leaving a thin "bed" of snow over cleared areas after the season's first significant storm, you reduce the chances of picking up foreign objects with the snowblower. (You'll also be less likely to experience freeze-up in underground water lines!)
- Direct the plume of snow away from buildings and vehicles. Plan snow clearing patterns to take advantage of the prevailing wind. While this can be difficult on some days, snowblowing is more efficient and visibility is greatly enhanced when you blow with the wind.
- Make it a policy to cut power to the snowblower before you leave the tractor seat.

