

<i>Hazard Review</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cuts, abrasions• Flying debris• Musculo-skeletal injuries	
<i>Related Safe Work Practices</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fuel Safety• Injury and Illness Prevention• Lifting, Body Mechanics and Ergonomics	
<i>Personal Protective Equipment</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eye protection• Hearing protective device• Long pants• Safety footwear	
<i>Authority</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CCR Title 8 Section 3563	
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This Safe Work Practice applies to all push and ride-on mowers, and has been broken down into three sections:

- A. General
- B. Power (push) mowers
- C. Ride-on, sit-down lawn mowers

The General section provides information that applies to both mower situations. The other sections are specific to that type of mower.

If you have additional standard operating procedures that are specific to your site, they must be at least as stringent as this Safe Work Practice.

A Qualified Person is a person **designated** by the employer; and by reason of **training**, experience, or instruction who has demonstrated the ability to perform safely all assigned duties; and, when required is properly licensed in accordance with federal, state, or local laws and regulations.¹

¹ Qualified Person definition obtained from "Safety and Health Training and Instruction Requirements". Retrieved September 11, 2012 from <http://www.dir.ca.gov>.

A. GENERAL

Before

1. Complete required training. This includes:
 - a) A review of the manufacturer's operating manual(s). Use the equipment in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the manufacturer. This includes following all signs and labels, and reviewing any manufacturer's operating manuals.
 - i) If the instructions provided in the operating manual conflict with this SWP, then follow the instructions in the manual. The manufacturer's instructions prevail over this SWP.
 - ii) Training on this SWP and those listed as related. These must be completed before the initial assignment and every 2 years thereafter.
2. Have and use the appropriate personal protective equipment as defined in the owner's manual and the box above, including hearing and eye protection.
3. Do not operate mower if it is past its next service due date. It must be turned in for service.
4. Evaluate the terrain to determine what accessories and attachments approved by the manufacturer are needed to properly and safely perform the job.
5. Clear the work area of rocks, bottles and debris that might be thrown by the blades.
6. Inspect the mower prior to starting based on the requirements of the Operator's Manual. Before you lift the deck for any reason (including inspection), pull the spark plug wire. Make certain that:
 - a) The mower and attachments are in good operating condition.
 - b) The blade is sharp and secure.
 - c) Fluid levels (oil, gas and water) are adequate.
 - d) Safety devices are in place.
 - e) Mounting bolts are tight.
7. If you find any damage to the mower as defined by the operator's manual and this Safe Work Practice such as loose screws, missing bolts, broken parts, or anything abnormal, STOP the engine, wait for all moving parts to stop, and correct the condition before you resume mowing with the mower requiring repair.
8. Never remove the cap of the fuel tank or add fuel while the engine is running or when the engine is hot (see *Fuel Safety*).
9. If fuel is spilled, do not attempt to start the engine. Move the machine away from the area of spillage. Avoid creating any source of ignition until fuel vapors have dissipated.

10. Ensure that the public is kept away from the work area. The mower can hurl objects in any direction. If a dog or person unexpectedly comes close to the mower while in operation, the blades of the mower should immediately be disengaged so that no unexpected debris from underneath the mower flies out and hits them.
11. Watch for hazards such as holes, roots, drains, pipes and insect nests that may be difficult to see.

During

12. Do not mow in the dark without installed lighting or equivalent.
13. Stop, turn off the engine, and inspect the blades and shaft if the mower runs into a rock or stump. Damaged blades can cause vibration, which can loosen the blades.
14. Keep hands and feet away from the cutting units.
15. Upon entering a park (whether on a service road or turf/unprepared surface), the driver will illuminate the headlights and Hazard Warning Lights (if installed). If the vehicle has an installed light bar, the driver will illuminate the Light Bar also. All lights are to remain illuminated while in the park. Note that this particular policy does not apply to operation of a vehicle on a public street within a park; however, the lights must be illuminated if leaving the public street and entering a service road or turf/unprepared surface within a park.
16. Activate the forward-moving aural signal on your vehicle upon entering a park (whether on a service road or turf/unprepared surface) and have the signal activated for the duration of the vehicle movement in the park.
17. When work requires vehicle travel across turf or other unprepared surfaces, the path of travel will be the shortest, most direct distance available from the service road or public street.
18. If work requirements necessitate operating a City vehicle on a parkscape or other surface not designed for vehicle operation, utilize a staff person outside the vehicle to serve as a safety watch or otherwise guide vehicle movement.
 - a) When two or more staff are traveling in a vehicle, use of a spotter is required.
 - b) When only the driver is in the vehicle and there is no spotter otherwise available, the following policy applies:
 - c) The driver will stop and park the vehicle at the point where the vehicle will depart the service road or public street.
 - d) The driver will exit the vehicle and will walk the intended path of travel across the turf/unprepared surface to inspect for terrain hazards and/or park users who might impede or interfere with the intended path of travel.
 - e) If park users are encountered, the driver will inform each person of the intended vehicle travel and ensure that there is no mutual interference.

- f) If determined to be safe, the driver will return to the vehicle and proceed along the inspected path of travel (following all of the other policies in this Safe Work Practice).
- g) At the completion of work, the driver will again follow this procedure to traverse the turf/unprepared surface back to the service road/public street.
- h) Note: This particular policy section does not apply to park utility vehicles (i.e. Cushmers, Trucksters, and other open bay, non-street legal vehicles) due to their open, unobstructed field of view.

19. Use of cell phones, whether hand-held or hands-free, or other mobile technology while driving on City business is prohibited. While driving on public streets, ear buds may not be used in both ears².

After

- 20. Refer to the operator's manual for specific repair and replacement requirements and procedures. Specifically, be sure to replace thin or worn blades.
- 21. If you find any damage to the mower as defined by the operator's manual and this Safe Work Practice such as loose screws, missing bolts, broken parts, or anything abnormal, STOP the engine, wait for all moving parts to stop, and correct the condition before you resume mowing with the mower requiring repair. Report any problem or deficiencies that develop during your shift. If the problem is serious, make it your responsibility to have the vehicle removed from service.
- 22. Have the mower serviced by Central Shops or a contracted mechanical service provider before putting the mower back into service.

B. POWER (PUSH) MOWER

During

- 23. Proceed slowly into tall, heavy grass to avoid choking the mower or stalling the motor.
- 24. Set mower at the highest cutting level when operating on rough ground.
- 25. Use caution around low hanging branches and shrubs.
- 26. Turn off the power before cleaning out twigs or grass.
- 27. Operate mower standing up, not bent over.
- 28. Mow across slopes. Your feet are less likely to slide under the mower, and the mower cannot roll back.

² DMV Code Section 27400
538-250 Mowers

29. Do not:

- a) Pull a walk-behind mower toward your body. Rather, disengage the self-propelled transmission, turn or pull the mower, then reengage the system.
- b) Clean under the deck with the engine running. To clean under the deck, turn the engine off, pull the spark plug, disengage the transmission, and use another object to clean under the deck.
- c) Adjust mowing height when engine is running.
- d) Reach under the machine. Avoid blade contact at all times! Always assume the blade is turning when the engine is running. Never put your hand or any part of the body, in or anywhere close to the blade path when the engine is running.
- e) Touch hot motor parts.
- f) Spray cold water on a hot engine.
- g) Make wheel height adjustments while the motor is running.
- h) Leave blades rotating when crossing graveled areas.
- i) Leave a running mower unattended.
- j) Remove grass catcher or unclog chute with motor running.
- k) Mow when surfaces are too slippery for you or the mower.
- l) Lock the drive control in an "ON" position.

After

30. If you need to clean under the deck of a reel mower after use, turn the engine off, pull the spark plug wire, disengage the transmission, and use a glove and a proper tool or object to dislodge any debris.

C. RIDE-ON, SIT-DOWN LAWN MOWERS

During

31. Set mower at the highest cutting level when operating on rough ground.
32. Disengage all attachment clutches and shift mower into neutral before attempting to start the engine.
33. Engage the clutch slowly; always keep the machine in gear, especially when traveling downhill.
34. Look behind mower when backing up. Back up only minimal distances.
35. Reduce speed on slopes when making sharp turns (to prevent tipping or loss of control) and when driving over rough terrain (to prevent body injury and loss of control).
36. Pull loads as follows:
- a) Use approved hitch points.
 - b) Limit load weight and size.

- c) Do not turn sharply.
 - d) Use counterweights as recommended by manufacturer.
37. Disengage power to attachments and stop the motor before leaving the operator's position or making any repairs or adjustments by:
- a) Setting the brakes.
 - b) Putting the transmission in park, if possible.
 - c) Turning off the engine and removing the ignition key.
38. Do not:
- a) Remove grass catcher or unclog chute with motor running.
 - b) Leave the mower on a slope.
 - c) Carry passengers.
 - d) Stop or start suddenly when going uphill or downhill.
 - e) Run motor indoors.
 - f) Mow across the face of the slope, unless the machine is designed for that purpose.
 - g) Bypass safety switches.
 - h) Touch hot motor parts.
 - i) Mow slopes before you have done a safety check. Ride-on, sit-down lawn mowers shall not be used on slopes that exceed the angle limitation when specified by the manufacturer. Keep in mind that slopes can be mild. For example, the Toro Groundmaster 580-D has a requirement that the mower cannot be used on side hills over 5 degrees, uphill over 10 degrees, or downhill over 15 degrees. Be sure to check the owner's manual prior to mowing.
 - i) When the manufacturer's instructions do not specify the angle limits for operating ride-on, sit-down lawn mowers on sloped surfaces, a Qualified Person shall evaluate the terrain and slope conditions to ensure the mower is operated in a safe manner.
 - j) Change engine governor settings or over speed the engine.
 - k) Raise the deck with the blades running.
 - l) Run the blades when not mowing.
39. Ride-on, sit-down lawn mowers shall not be operated in areas where the traction drive wheels, as measured from the outside wheel edge, are within 5 feet of the unprotected edges of retaining walls, embankments, levees, ditches, culverts, excavations or similar locations that present an overturn hazard. When it is necessary to operate ride-on, sit-down mower near ponds, creeks, reservoirs, canals, sloughs, lakes, golf course hazards and similar bodies of water, a Qualified Person shall evaluate the terrain and any slope conditions to ensure the mower is operated at safe speeds and at safe distances from such hazards.
40. Slow down and use caution when making turns and crossing roads, service roads, and sidewalks.
- a) Disengage blades when in transportation mode.
 - b) Reduce speed on slopes.

- c) Use caution at intersections. Allow fast moving vehicles to go first. Make sure you have enough time to get through the intersection safely without interrupting traffic flow.
- 41. When driving mowers to get somewhere (versus mowing), stay on pavement or paths as much as is possible. It is easier to see changes in elevation, and avoid holes or obstructions on a paved surface than in grass.³
- 42. Use care when loading or unloading the machine into a trailer or truck. Use good body mechanics (see *Lifting, Body Mechanics, and Ergonomics*).
- 43. Turn on the flashing warning lights, if provided, whenever traveling on a public road.
- 44. When operating a machine with a ROPS (roll over protection system), always use a seat belt.

After

- 45. Lower the cutting units, unless a positive mechanical lock is provided, when the machine is to be parked, stored, or left unattended.
- 46. Park mower on level ground.

For any questions, please contact EHS at 415-831-2780.

References:

- 1. Toro Form No. 3356-646 Rev A; 72 in Rear Discharge Mower and 62 in Rear Discharge Mower – Groundsmaster 3320 and 3280-D Operator's Manual, 2000

³ RPD Industrial Investigation, EHS Case #2831, DOI 6/23/05