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## Sample General Safe Work Practice Riding Mower

Accidents when using riding lawn mowers (also known as ride-on mowers) can cause many types of injuries, ranging from small cuts and burns to major amputations and fatalities from rollovers. Operating mowers without hearing protection can also contribute to hearing loss.

### Common hazards

- Cuts or amputations from blades
- Catching fingers, clothing, or jewellery in pinch points or wrap points
- Burns from hot points
- Cuts, abrasions, and bruises from being struck by projectiles to eyes, face, or exposed skin
- Major injuries or death from rollover
- Fire and spills when refuelling
- Prolonged noise exposure Push lawn mowers, including standard and self-propelled models, are a source of many types of injuries, from small cuts and burns to major amputations. They can also cause overexertion injuries, hearing loss, and eye injuries.

### Before you start

- Make sure you are familiar with the mower and its safe use.
- Make sure you are not fatigued or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE), including steel-toe footwear, hearing protection, and safety eyewear.
- Wear full-length, close-fitting clothing and a hat.
- Check that the mower is in good operating order. Make sure blades are sharp, nuts and bolts are tight, safety guards are in place, the motor is running smoothly, the brakes are working, and operator-present controls are working correctly.
- Check the worksite. Remove debris, look for holes, and check slopes and ground quality.

### While working

- Look to see if anyone else is in or around the work area. Never assume people will stay where you last saw them. Use extreme care when approaching blind corners, trees, or other visual obstacles. Stop the motor if anyone enters the area.
- Make sure the transmission is out of gear and the mower blade clutch is disengaged before starting the engine.
- Keep your hands and feet away from moving parts and discharge openings. Keep your feet on the platform while operating.

Please note: This document is for information purposes only as a guide. The safe job procedures (SJP) and safe work practices (SWP) created for your workplace should reflect your organizations processes, equipment and hazards as identified by a hazard analysis. Construction Safety Nova Scotia does not assume responsibility for the use of information in this document. If assistance is needed to complete a SWP and SJP for your organization please contact CSNS member services at [constructionsafetyns.ca](http://constructionsafetyns.ca) or 1.800.971.3888.



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- Don't carry passengers.
- Only work in daylight.
- Don't drive too close to creeks, ditches, or embankments.
- Disengage the mower blade when crossing pavement, walks, or gravel lanes.
- Don't mow in reverse unless it is specifically recommended in the operator's manual. Check behind you before backing up.
- Turn the mower off whenever you are not sitting on the seat.
- Shut down safely: Park on level ground, disengage power to the mower, set the brake, turn off the engine, and remove the key.

#### Slopes

- When using under- or rear-mount mowers, mow down slopes rather than across.
- When using side-mount, offset, or sicklebar mowers, mow across slopes with the mower on the uphill side.
- If you can't back up a hill, it's too steep and you should not mow it.
- If you feel uncomfortable on a slope, don't mow it.
- Make sure there is good traction. Exercise caution on wet grass or dry, scorched grass.
- Don't mow near steep drop-offs, ditches, or embankments

#### Refuelling

- Refuel outdoors on the ground.
- Turn off the engine and allow it to cool before refuelling.
- Extinguish all ignition sources (for example, cigarettes).
- Use only an approved gasoline container in good condition.
- Keep the nozzle in contact with the fuel tank.
- If you spill fuel on your clothes, change immediately.
- Never overfill the tank.
- Replace the cap and tighten it securely.

#### Loading and unloading riding mowers

- Work in pairs—one person should operate the mower and the other should provide direction.
- Make sure the truck or trailer is secured against movement.
- Turn off the truck engine and set the parking brake.
- Use chocks or blocking for trucks or trailers.
- If it's a tilt-and-load truck, position the load deck on the ground

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