

# SafetyAlert

We're Serious About Safety

## Snow Blower Safety



Snow blowers are an easy way to clear the winter snow from your property, but they present dangers as well. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, there are more than 4,000 emergency room injuries each year associated with snow blowers. Most, if not all, of these injuries could have been prevented.

The most common cause for injury related to use of a snow blower involves using one's hands in order to clear the collector or auger after it has become clogged.

Before operating the machine, you should always make sure that you have thoroughly read the manual and understand the operating procedures.

### General Safety Rules

#### DO

- Operate a unit only when there is good visibility and light. Falling snow, fog, etc. can reduce vision.
- Wear adequate winter outer garments and proper footwear to improve footing on slippery surfaces.
- Wear adequate safety gear, including safety goggles with side shields, appropriate hearing protection and protective gloves.
- Make sure that you are not feeling drowsy or sleepy while operating a snow blower.

#### DON'T

- Do not wear loose clothing, scarves, jewelry or anything that may get caught in rotating parts.
- Do not operate a unit during or after the use of medication, drugs or alcohol. Safe operation requires your complete and unimpaired attention at all times.

### Fueling Snow Blowers

#### DO

- Use an approved fuel container. Fuel is highly flammable and its vapors are explosive. Handle with care.
- Replace the fuel cap securely and clean up spilled fuel.

#### DON'T

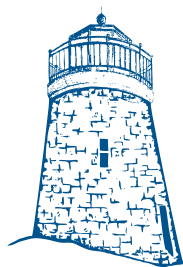
- Do not smoke. Avoid sparks and open flames.
- Do not fill a fuel tank when an engine is running, or when hot from operating.
- Do not fill or drain a fuel tank indoors.



Beacon Mutual offers a variety of training opportunities for employees, supervisors and managers. Please check our seminar schedule for more information.

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## Before Starting the Engine

### DO

- Keep children and people away from the operating area.
- Clear area of operation of any unwanted objects and debris. Thrown objects such as small branches or rocks can cause injury or damage the machine.
- Adjust runners to clear gravel or crushed rock surfaces safely.
- Disengage all clutches before starting an engine.
- Use only approved extension cords and receptacles when starting units equipped with an electric starter.

### DON'T

- Do not connect electric starter cord to any wiring system that is not a three-wire grounded system.

## Avoiding Trouble

- Abnormal vibrations are a warning sign. Striking a foreign object can damage a unit. Immediately stop the unit and engine and inspect for causes or damage.
- Before cleaning or inspecting the snow blower:
  1. Turn off the machine.
  2. Remove the key.
  3. Allow all moving parts to stop.
  4. Allow hot parts to cool.
  5. Remove wire from spark plug.
- Always allow an engine to cool before servicing.

**Never use your hands to remove materials – even after the engine is off. Fingers have been amputated when the blade has rotated unexpectedly. Use a small shovel, tool, or stick instead.**

## Safe Operation

### DO

- Always be aware of traffic and pedestrians when operating along streets, curbs, or sidewalks.
- Be sure of your footing, especially when operating in reverse or leaving the operator's position. Walk, never run, during operation.
- Keep all movement on slopes slow and gradual.
- Use a slow speed to avoid stops or shifts on slopes.
- Always look down and behind before and while backing.

### DON'T

- Do not direct discharge toward persons.
- Do not leave a running unit unattended. Always shut off engine and remove the key before leaving a unit.
- Do not operate the snow blower on uneven or rough terrain. Be extra cautious while operating near dropoffs, ditches, or embankments. Units can suddenly turn over if a wheel is over the edge of a cliff or ditch, or if an edge caves in.
- Do not start or stop the snow blower on a slope.
- Do not operate on steep slopes, clear snow across the face of slopes, or make sudden changes in speed or direction.
- Do not overload the machine capacity by attempting to clear snow at too fast a rate.

## Using the Proper Clearing Tools

Typically, the clearing tool is a plastic stick used for safely clearing clogs in the discharge chute or auger housing. If necessary, use a wooden broom handle on models without the tool.



**NEVER use your hands or feet to clear the discharge chute or auger.**



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