

Loss Control Lookout: Lawn Care

Spring has sprung and it's that time again: yard work! Groundskeeping and lawn care can be hazardous work. Weather, constant noise, insects, and chemical exposure are just a few of the risks we're exposed to while performing tasks out in the elements. Take precautions by considering a few of these safety reminders and tips!

Slip, Trip and Fall Hazards

Uneven terrain and slippery surfaces can turn a pleasant day into a terrible slip and fall injury. Make sure to:

- **Wear proper footwear-** Closed-toes, slip-resistant, and shoes/boots with good ankle support are most preferred!
- **Avoid Distracted Walking:** Yes, even multitasking on your phone can cause you to trip over obstacles while performing yardwork. Try avoiding this distraction.
- **Be Aware of Unmarked Obstacles:** Curbs or parking blocks should be painted with brightly colored paint. If you're in a residential area or performing yardwork for someone, walk the property first so you're aware of all obstacles and uneven terrain!
- **Awareness of Inadequate lighting/visual:** Slips, trips, and falls are more common in areas with inadequate lighting. Exercise caution in these areas or use a flashlight if needed.
- **Avoid working in Inclement Weather:** Rain or frost could lead to dangerous walking conditions. This is why good footwear is important and applying other techniques, such as "Walk Like a Penguin" are helpful in reducing these types of injuries. Avoid working in these conditions if at all possible.

Always Wear PPE

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) doesn't just apply to contractors and construction workers.

Whether you're in a commercial or personal lawn care setting, ensure your safety by protecting:

- **Hands:** Gloves can help prevent cuts and scrapes from branches/thorns.
- **Eyes:** Safety glasses should always be worn. Weed-Trimming can easily throw projectiles and your eye is not a pleasant place to have them be placed.
- **Ears:** Wear earplugs or hearing protection. Being exposed to small engines over time can result in hearing loss.
- **Skin:** Wear sunscreen and UV blocking clothing to protect from sunburn. Also consider wearing a wide-brimmed hat that covers your ears to further protect. Don't forget to wear sunscreen!
- **Stay Hydrated:** Drink plenty of water and electrolyte drinks to help avoid heat-related illnesses. Take plenty of breaks in the shade when temperatures are on the rise!