



## FLASH POINTS

### Lawn Mower Safety & Fire Prevention - July 2020

US Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that more than 60,000 people, including 9,000 children, are injured each year from the unsafe operation of lawn mowers in the United States. With the height of lawn mowing season comes the risk of lawn mower-related accidents and fires. Taking a few precautionary steps to reduce the risk of an accident will help in making your lawn mowing season go smoothly.

#### **SAFETY:**

- Shields should be kept in place to prevent contact with blades and other moving parts.
- Do not allow children to ride as passengers, and have them stay indoors or at a safe distance from the mowing area at all times.
- Prevent injuries from flying objects such as stones, sticks and toys by picking up objects prior to starting.
- Operators should wear pants, sturdy shoes (not sandals), and, depending on lawn surfaces, gloves, and hearing and eye protection are recommended.
- Follow age recommendations for young operators: a minimum age of 12 years for walk-behind mowers and 16 years for riding mowers.



#### **FIRE HAZARDS:**

When finished mowing, it is good practice to utilize a leaf blower, compressed air or other means to clean off combustible grass clippings from the deck and engine compartment, paying special attention to areas around the exhaust system, belts and pulleys.

It is also recommended to give your lawnmower adequate time to cool down before placing it back into a garage. An hour is generally sufficient. Many fires have been witnessed within 10-25 minutes after the mower was parked and shut off.

#### **MAINTENANCE:**

- When fueling your mower, be sure the engine is off and engine components are cool. Hot engine components are capable of igniting gasoline vapors produced from refueling.
- Monitor belts for uneven wear, cracks or missing portions of rubber.
- Monitor mower deck and frame surfaces for worn pulley and bearing races. If you notice signs of rubbing as a result of friction, address immediately as this may be a sign of a mechanical issue which could present a fire hazard.
- Follow your manufacturers' guidelines for grease zerks that are on your machine. This may require daily lubrication depending on usage.

