



## Safe-Mowing Suggestions

(NAPSA)—There are a few steps you should take to ensure a season full of safe, productive mowing.

That's because mower accidents occur each year due to unsafe mower operation, some of which lead to serious or fatal injuries to operators of all ages. Fortunately, most mower accidents are preventable.

Here are hints that can help:

- Ensure that all safety features are in place and functioning, including deflectors, guards, shields and warning labels to alert operators and others. Commercial-grade mowers may include a Rollover Protection System, or ROPS, along with a seat belt. The ROPS is intended to protect the operator in the event of an accidental rollover. As such, it should always be in the raised and locked position and used with a seat belt during mower operation.

- Before mowing, survey the site and clear it of any rocks, toys, branches or other debris that may be picked up by the mower blades. Such items can be thrown with considerable force and may cause injury.

- Wear appropriate clothing, including substantial footwear and eye and hearing protection. Be aware that loose clothing or dangling jewelry can become entangled in moving mower parts and lead to an accident and injury.

- Take extra care when mowing on hills and never mow on a slope greater than 15 degrees. Avoid sudden changes of speed or direction when mowing hills, which may cause a loss of traction. The key to safe hillside mowing is to stay off the slope if there is doubt of tipping or losing control.



**Always keep animals and children at a safe distance when mowing and use caution when mowing around blind corners.**

- Keep children and pets a safe distance from the area being mowed and pay particular attention when mowing around blind corners or objects that might block your view.

- Always operate in the “safety zone” when mowing around steep inclines, retaining walls, sudden drop-offs or unstable ground near water; that is, keep at least a two-mower-width distance between the mower and such hazards when using a ride-on mower. Mow these places with a walk-behind mower or hand trimmer.

- Never allow children or other passengers on mowers.

- If lightning is seen or thunder is heard in the area, do not operate the mower and seek shelter.

According to a leading mower manufacturer, Exmark Mfg., it's important for all mower operators to learn their specific equipment. In addition, the company advises, it's important to read the mower's owner's manual completely.

Many mower safety guidelines can be found in the manual, as well as at [www.exmark.com/Safety](http://www.exmark.com/Safety).