

HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

Mower Care A Wise Investment



Four simple service tips can help keep your lawn mower a cut above the rest.

(NAPSA)—Lawn mower owners who properly care for their machines can potentially save hundreds of dollars and increase the productivity of their mowers.

“Time and time again, I see people who were trying to pinch pennies by skipping basic maintenance or purchasing cheap parts end up having to buy a replacement engine for their mower,” said Paul Jurgens, Director of Customer Service for Exmark. “Most of the time, it can be avoided.”

Before the mowing season starts, Exmark, a leading manufacturer of commercial riding mowers, offers a complete checklist of mower service tips at www.exmark.com/servicetips.htm.

Jurgens emphasizes four tips:

1. Lawn mower owners should clean their units as often as possible, but minimize the use of water. Water and detergents can lead to corrosion problems. For example, if water sits on a bearing seal or an electrical connection, it can do more harm than good. Exmark recommends using compressed air or blowers as much as possible. If water is used to clean the mower, users need to grease and lubricate the unit afterward.

2. Users should sharpen blades and replace any damaged blades every eight to 10 hours of use. A dull blade increases the load on the mower’s belts, bearings and engine. An unbalanced blade can cause vibrations and stress to the cutting deck. Blade-balancing tools are inexpensive and readily available. Exmark recommends keeping an extra set of sharp, balanced blades on hand.

3. Lawn mower owners should use the oil recommended by the mower’s engine manufacturer. Many engine manufacturers suggest a certain weight of oil, and it may depend on the time of year. This can make a big difference in oil consumption, as well as in the proper lubrication of the engine. In addition, most engine manufacturers do not recommend the use of synthetic oils. The proper petroleum-based oil lubricates the engine adequately.

4. Users should mark the date on their gas cans when they fill up. Oxygenated fuels (fuels containing alcohol blends or MTBE [methyl tertiary butyl ether]) have a shelf life of 30 days. The fuel will then begin to separate and can cause engine damage.