



# Your Yard

## Tips For Getting Your Outdoor Power Equipment Ready For Winter

(NAPSA)—Fall is here, and as cold weather creeps in, it's time to put away your spring and summer outdoor power equipment, such as lawn mowers, leaf blowers, chain saws and trimmers, and get out what you will need for winter, such as snow throwers, generators and other small-engine equipment.

The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an international trade association representing more than 100 power equipment, engine and utility vehicle manufacturers and suppliers, offers tips to help home and business owners prepare for the weather change.

"Doing good maintenance in the fall means that your equipment will be in good shape when spring arrives and you want to tackle landscaping projects again," said Kris Kiser, president and CEO of OPEI. "Now is also the time to do snow thrower and generator maintenance and review safe handling procedures so you are ready when the snow flies."

First, review your owner's manual for your equipment. Refamiliarize yourself with how to handle your equipment safely and any maintenance needs. If you lost your manual, you can usually find it online.

**1. Service all your equipment.** Before storing equipment, clean and service it yourself or take it to a small-engine repair shop. For instance, drain and change engine oil and dispose of old oil safely. Service the air filter and per-



**When the weather turns chilly, it's time to swap out your lawn mower for your snowblower.**

form other maintenance activities as directed by your service manual. Check all winter equipment and see what maintenance and repairs are required, as well.

**2. Recharge the battery.** If your equipment has a battery, remove and fully charge it before storing or to ready your winter equipment for a sudden, unexpected weather event.

**3. Handle fuel properly.** Unused gas left in gas tanks over the winter can go stale. It can even damage your equipment. For equipment you'll store over the winter, add fuel stabilizer to the gas tank, then run the equipment to distribute it. Turn the engine off, allow the machine to cool, then restart and run until the gas tank is empty. For winter equipment, be sure you know the appropriate fuel for your equipment. Most outdoor power equipment, for instance, was designed, built and warranted to run on 10 percent or less ethanol fuel.

**4. Shelter your equipment from winter weather.** Store

your spring and summer equipment in a clean and dry place such as a garage, barn or shed. Winter equipment should also be away from the weather elements but available for use when needed. Always keep your outdoor power equipment out of the reach of children.

**5. Do a yard cleanup.** Clear the paths you use regularly, especially during the winter. Make space in your garage or basement before the weather changes so you have room to store larger yard items, such as patio furniture, umbrellas and summer toys.

**6. If you are getting out winter equipment, such as a generator or snow thrower, review safe handling procedures.** Familiarize yourself with your equipment, making sure you know how to turn the machine on and off and how to use the equipment safely.

**7. Find and prepare to fill your gas can.** Buy the type of fuel recommended by your equipment manufacturer no more than 30 days before you will use it. Remember, use fuel with no more than 10 percent ethanol in outdoor power equipment. Also, fuel goes stale and will need to be replaced if you have not used it within a month. And remember to use a fuel stabilizer if recommended by your manufacturer.

Get more information on safe fueling for outdoor power equipment at [www.LookBeforeYouPump.com](http://www.LookBeforeYouPump.com) and find additional safety tips at [www.OPEI.org](http://www.OPEI.org).