

Your Yard

Snow Thrower Usage: Questions To Help You Keep Safety In Mind

(NAPSA)—Clearing driveways, sidewalks and parking lots of snow is no small job but home and business owners can keep safety in mind.

“Get your snow thrower serviced now, before repair shops are busy. Weather is more unpredictable than ever so you want to be ready,” advises Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI) president and CEO Kris Kiser. “Review your owner’s manual so you can use your equipment safely, and have the right fuel on hand. Remember, protect your power. Gasoline-powered snow throwers should use E10 or less.”

These hints can help:

Getting Ready

Have you read your owner’s manual? Read up for safe handling procedures. If you lost your manual, you can look it up online (and store a copy on your computer). Review how to operate the controls. Be able to shut off your equipment quickly.

Have you checked your equipment since storing it? Make sure equipment is completely powered off when checking it over. If you forgot to drain the fuel before storing, drain the gas tank. Adjust any cables and check the auger—again when the equipment is powered off.

Did you put your equipment where you can get to it easily? Move your equipment to a convenient and accessible location.

Have you purchased the right fuel? Be sure to use the correct fuel, as recommended by your equipment’s manufacturer (for more information, see www.LookBeforeYouPump.com). Place gasoline in a fuel container and label it with the date purchased and ethanol content. Use only fresh fuel and make sure fuel is stored safely and out of the reach of children.

Are you fueling safely? Fill up the fuel tank on your snow thrower outside while the engine is cold. Never add fuel to a running or hot engine.

Are batteries charged? If using a battery or electric-powered snow thrower, make sure batteries are fully charged.

Is the area you intend to clear free of obstructions or hidden obstacles?



For safety’s sake, make sure your snow thrower is aimed properly.

Snow can hide objects. Doormats, hoses, balls, toys, boards, wires and other debris should be removed from the areas you intend to clear.

Are you dressed properly? Locate your safety gear and place it in an accessible location. Plan to wear safety glasses, gloves and footwear that can handle cold and slippery surfaces.

Operating Snow Throwers Safely— Questions to Ask

Do you have a clean-out tool or stick? NEVER put your hands inside the auger or chute. Use a clean-out tool (or stick) to unclog snow or debris from your snow thrower.

Do you turn off your snow thrower if you need to clear a clog? Always turn off your snow thrower and wait for all moving parts to come to a complete stop before clearing any clogs or debris.

Do you use your snow thrower in visible conditions? Never operate the snow thrower without good visibility or light.

Can you aim your snow thrower with care? Never throw snow toward people or cars. Do not allow anyone to stand in front of your snow thrower. Keep children and pets away from your snow thrower when it is operating.

Will you use extreme caution on slopes and hills? Do not attempt to clear steep slopes. Use caution when changing directions on slopes or inclines.

Do you know where your cord is? If you have an electric-powered snow thrower, be aware of where the power cord is at all times. Avoid tripping. Do not run over the power cord.

Learn More

For further safety tips and information, visit www.opei.org.