



# Hints For Homeowners

## When Storm Season Approaches, Ready Your Outdoor Power Equipment

(NAPSA)—At any time of year, storm preparedness is important. Hurricanes, floods and storms can damage property and endanger lives. The preparations you make ahead of bad weather, however, can help you recover faster and stay safer during the storm and the cleanup.

To help, the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI)—an international trade association representing power equipment, small engine, utility vehicle, golf car and personal transport vehicle manufacturers and suppliers—offers tips for home and business owners.

“Right before a storm, people can rush, and it’s easy to skip key steps in getting their outdoor power equipment ready,” said Kris Kiser, president and CEO of OPEI. “At all times of the year, keep your equipment in working order, have the right fuel on hand and know where your safety gear is. This is doubly true during storm season.”

Survey your property. Consider the damage a storm might cause and list the equipment you might need to weather the storm or make repairs afterward.

Take stock of your equipment. Make sure equipment is in good working order. If needed, take it to an authorized service center for maintenance or repair.

Find your safety gear. Avoid the scramble for sturdy shoes, safety goggles, hard hats, reflective clothing, flashlights with working batteries, and work gloves. Round them up now and store them in an accessible area with your equipment.

Review the owner’s manuals for your equipment. Know how to operate your equipment safely.

Keep the right fuel on hand for your outdoor power equipment. Fuel stations may be closed after a storm, so it’s important to protect your equipment by having the right fuel on hand. It is illegal to use any fuel with more than 10 percent ethanol in outdoor power equipment, and improper fueling may damage or destroy your equipment. Use the type of fuel recommended by your equipment manufacturer and store fuel in an approved container. For more information, visit [www.LookBeforeYouPump.com](http://www.LookBeforeYouPump.com).



**Be prepared for bad weather by giving your outdoor power equipment a good look-over.**

Use safety zones and protect bystanders. Observe a safety zone by keeping power lines at least 50 feet away from your work area. Keep bystanders, children and animals out of your work area. Do not allow other people near outdoor power equipment when starting it up or using it.

Follow safe procedures when using chain saws. Always stand with your weight on both feet and adjust your stance so you’re angled away from the blade. Hold the chain saw with both hands. Never overreach or cut anything above your shoulder height. Always have a planned retreat path if something falls. Understand kickback, which may happen when the moving chain at the tip of the guide bar touches an object, or when the wood closes in and pinches the saw chain in the cut.

Use generators safely. Generators should never be used in an enclosed area or placed inside a home or garage, even if the windows or doors are open. Place the generator outside and away from windows, doors and vents. There should be plenty of ventilation. Keep the generator dry and do not use it in rainy or wet conditions. Before refueling, turn the generator off and let it cool down.

Make sure all UTV operators know how to drive safely. Keep the UTV stable and drive slowly. Do not turn the vehicle mid-slope or while on a hill.

If removing water after a flood, use pumps safely. Never operate a centrifugal pump without water in the pump casing. All self-priming pumps require water to be added to the pump casing to start the priming process.

### Learn More

For further facts and tips, go to [www.opei.org](http://www.opei.org).