

Author:	Walt Russell	Revision #:	New
Approved by:	Bobby Lewis	Date Issued:	December 2018

SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES

String Trimmer / Brush Cutter

SOP # 12B-37

Hazard Review		
Eye & Face Exposure	Bees, Fire Ants, Snakes	Poisonous Plants
Noise / Vibration	Hot Surfaces	Fueling Engine
Traffic	Thrown or Hidden Objects	Position of Other Workers
Dehydration / Heat Stress	Dust / Pollen	Twisting / Bending
Rotating Blade / Shafts	Slips, Trips, and Falls	Uneven Terrain / Slopes
Required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (Based on job specific hazard review)		
Safety Glasses	Face Shield or Screen	Gloves
Hearing Protection	Safety Toe Boots	Safety Vest

1. Follow all manufacturers' guidelines. Review instruction manual for safe operation.
2. Review Safe Operating Procedures for applicable equipment and perform pre-operational checks.
3. This SOP applies to all string trimmers and brush cutters including models equipped alternately with string heads and brush blades.
4. Supervisors shall verify that operators are trained and qualified on each type of equipment before allowing the equipment to be operated.
5. Wear all required PPE when operating, including both safety glasses AND face shields or screens. Wear gloves and hearing protection while starting and operating trimmer.
6. Always use safe procedures for fueling trimmers. Do not smoke while handling fuel. Always stop engine before fueling and allow engine to cool. Always store fuel in approved container.
7. Always start engine on the ground. Do not drop start trimmer.
8. Inspect work area before trimming for hidden objects or other hazards
9. Take breaks to allow hands to maintain feeling and circulation to avoid repetitive motion and vibration effects.
10. Drink enough water or sports drinks to stay ahead of dehydration.
11. Make sure co-workers or bystanders maintain a safe distance from trimming.
12. Gearbox becomes hot during operation. Allow gearbox to cool before adding string or changing blades.
13. Do not overreach. Keep proper footing and balance. Move your feet, limit twisting at the waist and bending. Special care with footing must be taken on slopes, in slippery or wet conditions, and in high vegetation which may conceal tripping hazards.
14. Use the appropriate deflector for the string head or blade being used. Keep deflector adjusted properly according to the manufacturer's instruction manual.

Related SOP's		
General SOPs	Chapter 10	Hand Tools (Power & Manual) SOP#12B-13
Hand Removal of Vegetation	SOP#11B-42	