



MSU DAWG TRACKS

Working in your yard or planting and maintaining a garden is sometimes a necessity, but also a good source of physical activity. As with anything we do, there are hazards. The key is to be aware of these hazards and minimize the risk of injury by taking some safety precautions.

✓ **Keep an eye out for critters.** When you like being outside in warm weather, so do snakes and bugs.

- Wear bug spray to avoid bites from ticks and help keep the mosquitoes away.
- Be cautious, not reaching blindly into bushes, vegetable runs, and grassy areas.

✓ **Take care of your back.**

- Remember to squat and use your leg muscles when lifting heavy objects.
- When weeding, kneel or sit instead of bending over multiple times.

✓ **Be mindful of extension and power cord placement.**

- Ensure the power cords are secured back or not close to blades and cutting action, as with hedge trimmers.
- Never lay extension cords in water or wet areas.
- Do not use cords that cut or have missing prongs on the plug end.

✓ **Dress for the activity.**

- Gloves can help protect our hands from many things such as painful blisters, pokes of thorns, and accidental contact with poison ivy.
- Wear long pants when operating a weed trimmer, and don't forget the safety glasses.
- A wide brimmed hat and long sleeve, light weight shirt is a good choice, if out in the sunshine for extended periods, to help avoid sunburn.

✓ **Walk or make a pre-run of the area before mowing grass.**

- Make a mental note of spots that could be a problem – muddy areas, wash outs, exposed tree roots.
- Remove any objects that could be a flying debris hazard if hit by blades – limbs, toys, dog bones, and rocks.

✓ **Know your limits.**

- Break large projects into smaller task to avoid over exertion.
- Stay hydrated. If you experience dizziness, nausea, headache, or muscle cramps stop and take a break to cool off, as these are signs of heat exhaustion.

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