



Maine Farm Safety Program

by Dawna L. Cyr, farm safety project assistant, and Steven B. Johnson, Ph.D., Extension crops specialist

Hazards In and Outside the Home

Safety inside the home is as important as safety on the farm. Serious accidents happen each year in and around the home. Falling, lawn mowing, and using pesticides are major contributors to these accidents.

Falls in the Home

There are several ways to prevent falls in the home. Clean up spills promptly and remove obstacles from the floor. Apply nonskid backing to loose rugs, banisters and stairs. Nonskid strips should be applied to bathtubs and showers to prevent slipping.

Lawn Mowing Safety

Lawn mowing can be dangerous if one is not careful. Read the instruction manual. Know the various parts of the machine and what they do. Check for any additional safety instructions.

Wear the proper clothes for the job. Substantial shoes, long pants and close-fitting clothes are a minimum. Eye and ear protection are recommended. (See the fact sheet entitled "Choosing Safe Clothing for Farm Work," #2309.) Take time to teach an inexperienced person the proper mowing procedure. Go over possible situations.

Hazards In and Outside the Home

- **Keep walkways clear to avoid falls.**
- **Push a lawn mower across slopes; drive a mower up and down slopes.**
- **Never use food containers to store gasoline, pesticides or any other poison.**

Fill the gasoline tank outdoors and away from possible ignition sources. Wipe up spills and do not smoke while gasoline is being used. Store gas in an approved container away from the house. Fill up before starting, while the engine is cold. Do not forget to replace the gas cap snugly. When using lawn mowers, wait 10 minutes for the machine to cool before refueling.

Mow in good light so you can see clearly. Do not mow wet grass. There is a greater risk of slipping. Check the lawn for objects that may have been left behind by someone working in the yard, children, or pets. The fast moving blade can propel objects with incredible speed. Keep children and pets out of the mowing area. Allow no riders on mowers because of the risk of an accident. Be sure the blade has stopped completely before leaving the mower. Never leave the mower while the engine is running.

When mowing on slopes, you must consider the mower type in use. Mow up and down the slope when using riding mowers. Move back and forth across the slope when using a push mower. This gives better control of the mower and



reduces the chance of coming into contact with the mower if you lose control, slip, or fall.

Snow Blower Safety

Before the first snowfall, clear the areas where the snow removal is to take place, removing large stones, sticks, toys and other objects. Mark such obstacles as driveway markers and water and gas shut-offs so their locations under the snow are obvious. Adjust the collector housing height to assure clearance above gravel or rock surfaces before operation. Shut off the engine and wait for attachment blades to stop before clearing the auger or discharge chute. Disengage the attachment and stop the engine before changing the position of the deflector. Do not clear snow across the face of slopes because of the possibility of tipping over.

Gasoline

Gasoline must be properly stored around the home. Use only approved gasoline containers. Never put gasoline in empty drink or food containers. Clean up any spills immediately. Never leave gasoline containers where children can have access to them. Always close gasoline containers and put them away when finished using them.

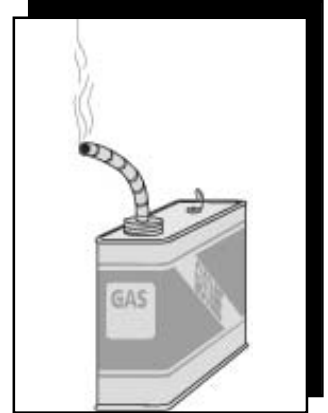
Home and Garden Pesticides

When using pesticides around the home and in the garden, you should take several safety measures. These safety measures are very similar to those used when dealing with commercial pesticides on the farm. For more detailed information, see the section on pesticides.

When pesticides are needed outside the home, begin by determining what insect, weed or disease is causing the problem. Decide if a pesticide is needed. Often problems can be controlled through mechanical or cultural means. If a pesticide is needed, then choose the right one for the job. Read the label and follow all the directions. Wear proper clothing when mixing and applying the pesticide. Be sure to apply it as directed, and put

away any unused portions. When finished, carefully put away applying equipment and leftover pesticides. Properly dispose of empty containers.

When working with pesticides in the home, there are several things to remember. Put away food that may come in contact with the pesticide. Discard any food that comes in contact with pesticides. Manufacturers suggest vacating the area being sprayed for several hours after application. Be very careful when applying the pesticides. Wear the proper protective clothing, and do not get any of the pesticide on bare skin. If you are using rodent traps or ant baits, put them where children won't get at them and check them regularly.





Maine Farm Safety Program

This Maine Farm Safety fact sheet is part of an educational fact sheet series produced by University of Maine Cooperative Extension. For more information on farm safety, contact your county Extension office.

Information in this publication is provided purely for educational purposes. No responsibility is assumed for any problems associated with the use of products or services mentioned. No endorsement of products or companies is intended, nor is criticism of unnamed products or companies implied.

© 2003, Reviewed 2020.

Call 800.287.0274 (in Maine), or 207.581.3188, for information on publications and program offerings from University of Maine Cooperative Extension, or visit extension.umaine.edu.

The University of Maine is an EEO/AA employer, and does not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, transgender status, gender expression, national origin, citizenship status, age, disability, genetic information or veteran's status in employment, education, and all other programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Sarah E. Harebo, Director of Equal Opportunity, 101 North Stevens Hall, University of Maine, Orono, ME 04469-5754, 207.581.1226, TTY 711 (Maine Relay System).