



## SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR SNOW BLOWERS

D. MURRAY CAMERON, OALA • MANAGER OF PARKLANDS AND GREENWAYS • OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT • CITY OF GUELPH

**A**s it happens every year, we'll be feeling the effects of 'Old Man' winter before too long and will be well entrenched in our respective activities related to winter control. Preparing for winter snow events includes making sure our motorized equipment has been fully serviced and deemed reliable for the coming season. Along with ensuring the likes of snow blowers and sand/salt spreaders are fully operational, have you taken the time to train your staff as to the safe operation of the equipment they will be expected to use? If not, now is the time to put such measures into place.

The development of written standard operating procedures for workplaces is imperative. The Occupational Health and Safety Act states that a supervisor shall advise a worker of the existence of any potential or actual danger to the health or safety of the worker of which the supervisor is aware, and that the supervisor will take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.

Before it's too late, you are encouraged to develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for workplace tasks or use of equipment that has the potential to cause critical injury and/or occupational illness.

The responsibilities of hiring and training new and returning staff for our spring operations will be upon us sooner than we may like to think. Now is the time to plan for and demonstrate due diligence by ensuring your staff will be adequately trained and signed-off on standard equipment and/or operating procedures. With a safer winter operation in mind, the example of a *Snow Blower SOP* has been provided for your reference. Please revise it as you see fit to reflect the safe operation of your specific make and model of equipment. ♦

**SNOW BLOWER SOP ON NEXT PAGE**

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# Standard Operating Procedure

By designing an SOP for every piece of equipment, the message is loud and consistent for every employee. The following is a seasonal example.

## WARNING!

This Safetygram is designed as a tool to be used in conjunction with the operator's manual in the safe operation of the **walk behind snow blower**. Further site training and experience are necessary for competent operation.

## SAFE PRACTICES

- **DO NOT USE** equipment unless trained.
- If equipment is damaged or malfunctions, **DO NOT USE**. Report to your supervisor immediately.
- **DO NOT REMOVE** or circumvent any safety devices on the equipment.
- **ALWAYS WEAR** prescribed personal protective equipment.
- **FAMILIARIZE** yourself with the operating manual before use.

# Snow Blower Walk Behind

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT



- Green patch safety boots
- Gloves (for inspection)
- Warm seasonal clothing
- Follow legislations and use P.P.E.
- I.E. (safety vest, reflective striping, safety glasses)

## PRE-USE INSPECTION & MAINTENANCE

- Pre-use inspection of unit.
- Check engine oil and fuel levels.
- Check for loose or worn parts.
- Adjust runner to allow 1/8" (3mm) to 1/4" (30mm) clearance between scraper blade and uneven or loose gravel surfaces.
- With the key in STOP position, squeeze Auger Clutch Lever to engage position pull the Recoil Starter Handle. If you cannot pull the handle then the impeller may be frozen and you may have to move the unit to a warm area to thaw.
- If unit is equipped with operation lights, check for proper operation.
- After starting the snow blower, test all controls that operate the blower. Check the drive clutch, the auger clutch and the chute adjustment. When disengaged the clutches should quickly stop the auger, impeller and drive wheels.
- Keep the locking pin in the right wheel hub when blowing snow for best traction.

## CAUTION

- Do not operate this equipment with loose clothing or long hair that might get caught in rotating parts.
- If the unit gets clogged shut the engine off before clearing.
- Remember that your surrounding area can change its structure in seconds and will not be the same as you remember it on your last pass just seconds ago.
- Be always aware of other traffic in your vicinity.
- Allow the engine to cool before refuelling.
- Obey safety stickers on the unit.



## STARTING PROCEDURE

Turn the discharge chute straight ahead. Make sure the traction and attachment clutches are fully disengaged. Push the primer bulb 2 or 3 times. If the engine is cold, apply the choke. Set the throttle to the starting position. Insert the key and push to the RUN position. Pull the rope in a continuous full arm stroke. If using the electric start, follow the first six steps listed above then push the start button. Do not hold the start button for more than 15 sec.

## OPERATING PROCEDURE

- First do a visual inspection of area to remove snow.
- Check area for obstacles, bystanders, wind direction, objects that may damage the unit or get thrown by accident and property that may be damaged by thrown snow or other projectiles.
- Have a plan in your head before you start blowing snow.
- Engage the auger clutch with the unit clear of snow. Now engage the drive clutch, the auger will remain engaged until the drive clutch is released.
- Increase the throttle to full for normal operation.
- Transporting should be done at a lower throttle.
- Always adjust the discharge chute for height and direction before engaging the auger.
- Slow down before changing direction.
- Release the drive clutch to stop the unit and allow the auger to run for a short time to let it clear and avoid freezing. Throttle the engine down before shutting it off with the key.

## TRANSPORTATION

Choose a transport gear that you are comfortable with. Do not transport at full throttle. Do not engage the auger clutch for transporting. Secure the unit on a trailer or in a truck for transporting the unit from site to site.



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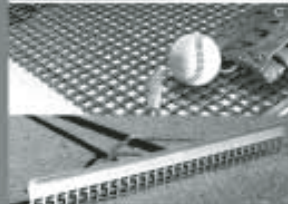
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