



GOALS

This safety session will teach trainees that landscaping exposes them to:

- Hot and stormy weather, insects, animals, and poisonous plants
- Power equipment that can cause serious injuries
- Pesticides with deadly chemical hazards

Applicable Regulations: Many standards may apply, including Personal Protective Equipment (29 CFR 1910.132), Hand and Portable Power Tools (29 CFR 1910.241-.244), Hazard communication (29 CFR 1910.1200, and the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) Pesticide Worker’s Protection Standard (40 CFR 170)



1. Workers should always prepare themselves for outdoor work by wearing clothes to protect themselves from the conditions they will face.

- In hot weather they may require sun protection and will need to drink liquids and take frequent rest periods.
- They should wear gloves, long trousers, and long-sleeved shirts to guard against exposure to poisonous plants, insects, snakes, or other animals.
- They should pay attention to local weather forecasts and be prepared to take safe cover promptly in case of a thunderstorm.
- In addition, workers who operate power equipment may need gloves, safety eyewear to protect themselves from small flying debris, and hearing protection from noisy mowers or other power equipment.

2. Power mowers present many hazards—you can begin to protect yourself by reading the manual to be sure you are familiar with safe operation.

- Check fuel level before starting the equipment, and never fill the fuel tank when the equipment is hot.
- Gasoline spilled on a hot surface can easily ignite and cause a flash fire when the engine is restarted.
- Inspect the area to be mowed and remove objects like sticks and stones that can be thrown by the mower as it does its job.
- Look around carefully to see that there are no children or pets nearby.
- If the mower gets jammed, make sure it is turned off, completely stopped, and that spark plugs have been removed before putting your hands anywhere near the blades.
- Whether you are walking behind a mower or riding one, take extra care on slopes to prevent the equipment from overturning.
- Don’t mow when the grass is wet—you won’t get a good even cut, and slippery grass can cause a serious accident.

3. Chain saws are great tools, but they should never be operated by anyone who has not had specialized training.

- If you are only cutting small branches (4 inches or less), it’s much safer to use a hand saw or axe.
- Brush cutters are also excellent for clearing small growth.





Safety Trainer **Landscaping Safety**

- Hedge clippers and edgers are other great labor savers for landscapers—they are not designed for overhead trimming, however. Keep them in front of your body when you use them.
- Some safety rules apply for any power equipment:
 - Read the manual before you start—even if you think you know it all.
 - Inspect the equipment to be sure it is in good condition.
 - Be sure any guards are in place—they can't help you if they're not.
 - Avoid using electrical equipment in wet conditions.

4. **Keep the use of pesticides to a minimum—the word itself means that they are designed to kill pests—pesticides are POISONS!**

- Always read the safety data sheet (SDS) and label instructions before using any pesticide.
- Be especially careful with concentrated pesticides that you must dilute properly before using—they are extremely dangerous.
- Wear gloves and cover arms and legs to protect your skin from contact.
- Respiratory protection and safety glasses may be needed as well—again, the label will tell you how to protect yourself.
- Read the pesticide label once more for the proper disposal method—it may be necessary to take leftover material (or even empty containers) to a special hazardous materials disposal site in your area.
- Do not wash items of contaminated clothing with your regular family laundry—wash them separately and clean the washer thoroughly before using it for other clothing.

5. **Landscaping is often a popular job for teenagers and college students during their summer vacations.**

- Both federal and state laws may restrict workers under the age of 18 from operating dangerous machinery and restrict their exposure to pesticides.
- Know what the laws are in your area.
- Even if such work is allowed, employers and fellow workers need to be aware that young people may not be familiar with hazards and may require extra training and supervision to keep them safe.



DISCUSSION POINTS:

What specific hazards are you likely to run into as part of your duties? Are there any questions about the equipment you will be using? Review the precautions for pesticides used in your operations.



CONCLUSION:

Landscaping work can be enjoyable—make it safe as well.



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE:

Have your employees take the Landscaping Safety quiz. By testing their knowledge, you can judge their understanding of the hazards of landscaping work or whether they need to review this subject again soon.

