

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Safety Tips: Outdoor Electrical Safety

Performing work outside in varying weather conditions is stressful at best. If you throw in the possibility of mistakes or unfocused safety flaws, then bad things can happen to the individual involved.

As a "heads up" on outdoor safety, we shall discuss some factors that, if practiced, will make the outdoor work experience more enjoyable, less stressful and much safer.

Outdoor Power Tools and Equipment-

Protect yourself from injury:

- Turn the tool off, unplug it and put it in the lock position when carrying it or connecting attachments such as a mower basket or saw blades.
- Store the tools inside to protect them from the weather elements, either rain or heat.
- If an electrical tool falls into a pool or water hole, unplug it before trying to retrieve it.
- Store all your outdoor tools for summer and winter use inside buildings for the obvious reasons- protection and extended useful life.

Personal Protection Equipment-

Safeguards on outdoor electrical equipment are that for a purpose:

- ✓ Check guards on equipment before each use.
- ✓ Check to be sure that safety goggles, hearing protection, dust masks, gloves and other safety gear is available and in good functioning order so that it is ready as needed for the various jobs that come up.
- ✓ Wear the proper clothing for the job. For example, refrain from wearing sandals when mowing (both with rider or walker) or using a weed trimmer. You should wear hearing and eye protection when using a weed trimmer.
- ✓ When using a chain saw, you should wear gloves, chaps, hearing protection and eye protection.

Extension Cords-

- ✓ For outdoor use, use only weather-resistant heavy gauge cords that are marked "for outdoor use." Weather resistant cords have extra protection to keep the water from seeping in and also to withstand tougher treatment.
- ✓ Be sure that the cord has a higher amperage rating than the tool that you will be using. Example: The cord used with a portable saw should be rated higher than the saw.
- ✓ Keep the cords out of your work path or work area.
- ✓ Check the cords before each use for frays, broken or damaged plugs, etc. Damaged cords or broken plugs should be replaced immediately and should not be put into use unless they are good working condition.
- ✓ **Remember!! Extension cords are for temporary use only and not as a permanent fixture.**

Electrical Outlets and Receptacles-

- ✓ Ground Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs) should be used according to your electrical code. Here in Mississippi, our code requires all wet or moist areas within a space of 60 inches to be equipped with the GFCIs. They can be a "lifesaver" not a luxury.
- ✓ Protect outlets when they aren't in use by keeping a cover over them.
- ✓ Protect electrical products from the elements when not in use.

Power lines-

- Before placing a ladder or trimming limbs from trees, check the area to be sure that you won't be in contact with power lines.
- Many power lines now are underground, so before you dig, call 8911 to locate and mark these lines for you. It can save you a loss of service or possibly even an electrical shock injury.

KEY TO LONG LIFE > LIVE SAFELY

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BE SAFE <> BE ALERT <> BE ALIVE!!!