Toolbox Talks

Power Washer Safety

Toolbox Talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions.
Find more Toolbox Talks on the Occupational Safety web page.

Discussion Date:

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Supervisor:

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Participants:

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General Information

Keeping equipment and facilities clean helps with maintenance, performance, and aesthetics. Despite the benefits, pressure washers can cause serious injury if not operated correctly. Before using, learn how to properly operate.

Before Operating

- Read the manufacturer's operating manual prior to use.
- Know how to use and maintain the power washer.
- Protect yourself from carbon monoxide poisoning by only starting and running a gas-powered unit outside and ensure proper ventilation during operation.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment
  - Safety glasses or goggles or a face shield (with safety glasses or goggles).
  - Enclosed footwear with good traction (preferably waterproof).
  - Hearing protection (gas-powered units).
  - Protective clothing (long pants, waterproof top and bottom)
  - Gloves with good dexterity.

Power Washing Safety Tips

- Maintain a minimum 6-ft. distance when spraying water around power lines, electrical masts or outlets.
- Engage the safety lock on the trigger when you are not washing and turn off when changing nozzle tips.
- Before uncoupling hoses, stop the machine, turn the water off and squeeze the spray wand trigger to release all water pressure in the system.
- Remain aware of your surroundings for any changes that may turn hazardous.
- Do not hold the spray tip closer than 12-inches to a surface.
- Do not point the pressure washer at people, animals or put any body part in front of the nozzle. The pressurized water stream could penetrate your skin and cause serious injury.
- Do not use pressure washers while working from ladders or elevated surfaces.