

NASA-LaRC SAFETY NEWSLETTER

A PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICE OF SAFETY AND FACILITY ASSURANCE, SEMA

June 1994

SAFETY AROUND LAWN MOWERS

Each weekend, an estimated 55 million Americans push or ride gasoline or electric powered lawn mowers. For most people, mowing the lawn is a seasonal chore; for a surprising number of others, however, lawn mowing results in serious injury.

The most serious injuries are amputated fingers and toes. The most dangerous mowers are riding mowers, which kill many people each year.

Safety of push mowers is improving, partly because of tougher federal standards. Injuries from these mowers have declined nearly 40 percent since 1982. It was then that a federal regulation required that all new mowers automatically shut off when the user steps away from the machine. In 1983, 41,900 people sought treatment in emergency rooms for mower related injuries, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. By 1989, that number had dropped to 25,800.

There has not, however, been a decrease in the number of injuries caused by riding mowers. In 1983, 18,400 people were hurt on riding mowers; in 1989, the number rose to 19,600. Most deaths from riding mowers occur in children who are accidentally run over by parents and grandparents.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission Advises:

- * Keep children indoors when the grass is being cut.
- * Never give a child a ride on a mower.
- * Wear heavy shoes or boots. Never cut the lawn barefooted. Spiked golf shoes are recommended for cutting on hills or wet grass.
- * Wear eye protection.
- * Do not drink alcohol before mowing.
- * Do not mow grass at dusk.
- * Pick up rocks and sticks on the lawn before mowing.

CHEMICAL SAFETY

There have been recent cases of chemicals being delivered at LaRC without Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) with them. Employees are reminded that Langley Hand Book (LHB) 1710.12, "Potentially Hazardous Materials," defines the requirements for the use of chemicals. The procurement of potentially hazardous material at LaRC shall be documented by completion of NASA Langley Form 44. Approval by the signatories of this form indicates authorization for procurement, either by NASA Langley Form 125 "Purchase Request/ Purchase Order", Electronic Purchase Order, or Credit Card purchase. Failure to follow these requirements is a violation of LaRC regulations and could possibly lead to disciplinary action.

Any material that is received at LaRC without the MSDS will not be accepted from the transporter and will be returned to the supplier.

If you have any questions concerning the proper procedure to be followed for the purchase or handling of chemicals, please refer to LHB 1710.12. This handbook is incorporated into the LaRC Safety Manual and is available from your Facility Safety Head or Facility Coordinator.

Playground Area

Summer is here and the playground area at the rear of Building 1222 (LaRC Activities Building) will be used by more and more people. Many of the visitors will be young children who frequently run from one area to another. Vehicle drivers are reminded that the speed limit behind the Activities Building (North Wright Street) is 10 miles per hour.