

# GARDENING TIPS

With the onset of warmer weather, homeowners begin the annual task of cleaning up yards and getting their gardens ready. But with the rush to beautify landscapes, safety should stay top of mind.

Never underestimate the potential hazards of handling and using yard equipment, tools, pesticides and fertilizers. Follow these important tips for keeping you and your family safe:

## FIVE TIPS TO CONSIDER FOR GARDENING SAFETY

1. **DON'T TAKE ON MORE THAN YOU CAN HANDLE**
2. **LIFT PROPERLY**
3. **USE THE RIGHT TOOLS AND KEEP THEM PROPERLY MAINTAINED**
4. **WEAR APPROPRIATE GEAR**
5. **USE PESTICIDES AND FERTILIZERS WITH CAUTION**



**BC Forest Safety**

Safety is good business

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## DON'T TAKE ON MORE THAN YOU CAN HANDLE

- Make sure you're physically ready to take on the tasks.
- Be careful to avoid fatigue and heat stress.
- Avoid sudden or sustained periods of activity, take periodic breaks and drink plenty of water.

## LIFT PROPERLY

- Keep your back straight, bend your knees and lift with your legs.
- Get help moving or lifting heavy objects like mulch, soil, large shrubs, trees and firewood.

## USE THE RIGHT TOOLS AND KEEP THEM PROPERLY MAINTAINED

- Store your lawn and garden tools in a safe area. Inspect tools before each use - don't use if damaged.
- Read the equipment owner's manuals and operate them according to instructions and only for the job they were built to perform.
- Unplug all power tools when not in use, even if they are in the "off" position.
- Don't leave tools unattended or allow children or inexperienced adults to operate them.
- Before using any equipment, inspect the area in which it will be used and remove objects that could potentially damage people, equipment or property.

## WEAR APPROPRIATE SAFETY GEAR

- Wear shoes and gloves. Wear shoes that protect your entire foot. The safest footwear has a non-skid sole and safety toe. Rubber boots and gloves offer the most protection when applying chemicals.
- To prevent hearing damage, use ear protection such as earplugs while operating a mower, blower or other noisy equipment.
- Safety goggles can protect eyes from a number of hazards. Always wear eye protection when mowing, blowing, weed whacking, pruning or other tasks that can cause flying debris.
- Protect your lungs and nasal passages by wearing a dust mask. Ask your local home-improvement store about specialty masks to use when applying garden chemicals.
- Play it safe around electricity and gas. Equip all outdoor electrical outlets with ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCI). If using extension electrical cords, ensure they are UL-approved for the required power and outdoor use.
- Never use electrical equipment - including electric mowers, edgers or trimmers - when raining or on wet/damp grass or plants.
- If using gas powered machinery, store gas in an approved container. Fill gas tanks outside using a funnel to prevent spills and never fill if equipment is operating or the engine is hot.

## USE PESTICIDES AND FERTILIZERS WITH CAUTION

- Store chemicals in their original containers and locked in cabinets away from children and pets.
- Always read the label and follow directions regarding proper use, suggested personal protective equipment, proper and safe method of disposal and if exposed, appropriate first-aid treatment.
- Wear long sleeves, long pants, rubber gloves and boots, and eye protection when mixing and applying chemicals.
- Wash hands and clothes and rinse rubber gloves and boots to eliminate any chemical residue when dusting or spraying is completed.
- Wash hands after completing any garden or lawn project.

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