

Job Name: _____ Job Site Location: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

Topic 511: Leaf Blower and Blower Vac

Introduction: Leaf blowers and blower vacuums are extremely efficient for cleaning parking lots, construction equipment, and debris from roadways and construction sites. Leaf blowers and vacuums are more time and cost efficient than a rake or a broom. When used properly, there is little disturbance to the surface. Following are safety guidelines for safe usage of leaf blowers and blower vacuums:

Leaf blowers and vacuums can be hand-held or attached to your back. Both types are powered by either a 2-stroke or 4-stroke engine. Read the operator's manual provided by the manufacturer before you use the leaf blower and vacuum. All workers need to know how the leaf blower works and how to use it properly before operations begin. Untrained employees should not use a leaf blower.

- **Stay mindful** and alert when using a leaf blower or vacuum.
- **Do not** point an operating blower in the direction of people or animals.
- **Make** sure bystanders, including other operators, are at least 50 feet away.
- **Stop** blowing and vacuuming when you are approached.
- **Do not** use a blower indoors or in poorly ventilated areas.
- **Inspect** the blower and vac before and during use to make sure controls, parts, and safety devices are not damaged and are working properly.
- **Never** modify a blower or vac that has not been authorized by the employer.
- **Do not** operate a blower or vac while standing on a ladder, rooftop, tree, or other unstable surface.
- **Use** the nozzle attachments to reach hard to get at spaces and high places.
- **Work** carefully. You need to be safe, courteous, and responsible when working in public.
- Ear plugs or earmuffs.
- Safety goggles.
- Non-slip, heavy-duty work gloves.
- Sturdy protective clothing.
- Long pants
- Long sleeves shirts
- Shoes or boots with non-slip soles.
- Respirator
- Dust mask

Personal protective equipment: Do not wear anything loose. Tie back long hair.

Handling and storage of fuel:

- **Be careful** not to spill any gas when fueling.
- **If fuel** has spilled on the blower or vac, wipe dry before using.
- **Use** the correct fuel/oil mix. Check the operator's manual.
- **When** refueling during work, turn off the engine, and allow it to cool before fueling.
- **Loosen** the cap slowly to relieve the pressure in the tank.
- **Always** retighten the fuel cap securely.

Operating a leaf blower and vacuum:

- **Do not** use early in the morning or late in the day.
- **Do not** operate the blower in heavy winds.
- **Never** point the nozzle, or blow debris, toward people.
- **Do not** blow debris toward open windows or doors.
- **Do not** leave the blower running when unattended.
- **Do not** use a blower or vac to spread or pick-up chemicals, or other toxic substances.
- **Use** the leaf vacuum or power broom with water.

Dust awareness:

- **Start** with the nozzle close to the ground. Then raise it to a height where it does not generate dust.
- **Use** the full lower nozzle extensions to minimize dust.
- **Pay attention** to what you are moving and picking up.
- **A leaf blower** and vac should not be used to clean up large amounts of gravel or gravel dust, construction dirt, plaster dust, and cement or concrete dust. Check your local zoning laws for statutes concerning two-stroke engine pollution.
- **Start** the blower at a minimum 10 feet away from the fuel.
- **Store** all fuel in a well-ventilated area.
- **Store** all fuel in a properly marked safety container.
- **Make** sure the spark plug boot is secure to avoid sparks and possible ignition of fuel vapors.
- **Never** smoke while handling fuel, or during operations.
- **Do not** allow bystanders to approach while refueling.
- **Use** the lowest possible throttle speed to do the job to reduce noise.
- **Use** nozzle attachments that help reduce sound.
- **Avoid** using more than one blower at a time, especially in neighborhoods or around buildings, where the sound can be intensified.
- **Inspect** the condition of the leaf blower muffler, air intakes, and air filter to make sure they are in good operating condition.
- **Practice** moving other objects such as clippings, or paper, without moving dust, to ensure safe operations.
- **Always** water dusty areas before using a blower.
- **Never** use a leaf blower to move excessively dusty materials.

Conclusion: Remember to always be aware of the hazards of dust. Utilize these safety guidelines for the safe use of leaf blowers and blower vacs.

Work Site Review

Work-Site Hazards and Safety Suggestions: _____

Personnel Safety Violations: _____

Employee Signatures:

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness.)

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
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These guidelines do not supercede local, state, or federal regulations and must not be construed as a substitute for, or legal interpretation of, any OSHA regulations.