



Hints For Homeowners

Get Your Outdoor Power Equipment Ready For Winter (And Spring)

(NAPSA)—How well your outdoor power equipment works the next time you need it could depend on how you winterize and store it. Here are hints that can help:

Do your winterization tasks in a safe work zone. Before you start, set up a safe work zone. Work only in a well-ventilated area that is away from heat sources, sparks or flames.

Collect your outdoor power equipment that you intend to store. This might include a lawn mower, generator, string trimmer, chain saw, edger, power washer, blower, chipper, splitter or other tool that uses a small engine to do outdoor work.

Read the owner's manual. Always consult your owner's manual for directions on how to properly winterize and store your equipment. If you can't find your manual, check the manufacturer's website.

Be safe. Before servicing or repairing any outdoor power equipment, disconnect the spark plug and battery cables. Wear safety glasses and gloves to protect against harmful chemicals and debris.

Drain the fuel. Stored equipment should not have fuel in its tank. Many fuels today contain ethanol, which absorbs water and may phase separate, causing operating problems. If there is fuel in the tank, remove what remains. Run the engine until it stops.

Store leftover fuel properly. Gasoline should be stored no more than 30 days without being treated with a fuel stabilizer. Use



Store your lawn care equipment carefully so it will be ready to restore your lawn when the weather warms.

a sealed container that is approved for fuel storage. Always keep fuel out of the reach of children and away from heat sources or flames.

Check and clean your equipment. Check for loose belts or missing or damaged guards. Check and tighten all screws and nuts. Grass, leaves and dirt that have accumulated on the equipment should be removed.

Lubricate, sharpen and charge as needed. Check the oil level and blade condition. Change the oil now if needed. Get your lawn mower blade sharpened so it will be ready for spring. Inspect the spark plug, replace it and add clean engine oil. Check the air filter and clean or replace as needed. If your equipment has a removable battery, take it out and store it in a warm spot. If you have a battery charger, you may want to charge the battery before storing.

Take your equipment in for servicing if needed. A busy lawn care season may have left

your equipment worn and in need of repair. The winter season is when repair shops are the least busy, so if your equipment needs a tune-up or additional servicing, now is a good time to take it in.

Find a safe storage space. Store your equipment away from pool chemicals, cleaners or fertilizers—anything that could cause corrosion from spills. Your storage area should be cool and dry, and your equipment should be out of the reach of children and pets.

Properly store your supplies. Avoid spills in your storage space by storing your lawn care and outdoor supplies properly. Leftover lawn care materials should be stored in sealed containers, so pests such as rodents are not drawn to your storage space.

Find your winter equipment and place it in an accessible location. Dig out the snow shovels, snowblowers or throwers, scrapers, ice melt or rock salt. If you are out of winter supplies, now can be a good time to stock up before you need them. Place your winter equipment and supplies in an accessible location.

“Well-maintained equipment will last longer and save consumers money. Winterizing and storing outdoor power equipment properly over the winter means that when spring arrives, your equipment will be ready,” explained Kris Kiser, president and CEO of the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an international trade association representing power equipment, small engine, and utility vehicle manufacturers and suppliers.