

# HINTS FOR HOMEOWNERS

## Lawn And Garden Safety Tips

(NAPSA)—While our backyards and gardens are usually peaceful havens from the world's hustle and bustle, their upkeep can lead to injury when proper safety precautions are not followed. Each year about 400,000 people are treated in hospital emergency departments for injuries related to the use of lawn and garden tools.

“Although most injuries are minor, like cuts and scratches, some can be quite severe,” said Larry Alexander, MD, of the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP). “While you may have a green thumb with plants, it is not a good idea to be green about how to protect yourself as you care for your lawn and garden.”

ACEP offers the following safety guidelines to prevent yard injuries:

- Wear protective eyewear (glasses, goggles, face shield) when operating all gardening equipment.
- Wear earmuffs or earplugs.
- Wear protective clothing such as close-fitting clothes, gloves, long pants, long-sleeved shirts and slip-resistant shoes.
- Wear sunscreen and stay hydrated.
- Don't lift yard waste that is too heavy for you. Utilize a dolly or wheelbarrow to help transport heavy loads.
- Don't walk on slippery or uneven surfaces while carrying yard waste or operating equipment.
- Follow the manufacturer's directions when using any chemicals on your lawn. Keep your child away from the lawn after chemi-



**The grass is often greener—and more appealing—when you take safety precautions before working in the garden.**

icals are used.

- Store all gardening chemicals in a locked, ventilated area that is out of a child's reach.
- Hoses should be stored properly after use to avoid tripping. Lay ladders on their sides. Lay rakes with tines down.
- Never work with lawn and garden equipment in damp or wet conditions.
- Install a ground-fault circuit interrupter to avoid electrical shock.
- Before mowing, remove debris from the lawn such as rocks, metal, glass, sticks and branches.
- Keep a first-aid kit in your home and emergency medical numbers posted near your phone.

For more information on health and safety topics, visit [www.ACEP.org](http://www.ACEP.org).