

# YOUR Lawn

## Safe Mowing Is No Accident



(NAPS)—Reading a lawn mower owner's manual probably isn't at the top of the average consumer's priority list—but it should be.

Unsafe operation of lawn mowers leads to thousands of accidents each year, many resulting in serious or fatal injuries to adults and even young children. Yet most of these accidents can be prevented.

"If you turn on a mower without knowing how to operate it properly, you're sacrificing your safety and the safety of those around you," said Rod Benson, engineering services manager for Exmark, a mower manufacturer.

Mower safety guidelines are in owner's manuals and at [exmark.com/safetytips.htm](http://exmark.com/safetytips.htm). Here are a few of the key safety recommendations:

1. Before mowing, clear the area of rocks, sticks, toys or other debris that can easily be picked up by mower blades and thrown through the discharge chute, causing injury.

2. Leave all mower safety features in place such as guards,

shields, deflectors and warning decals to protect operators and others nearby.

Commercial-grade mowers from Exmark may also include a ROPS (Rollover Protection System). Similar to a roll bar on a race car, ROPS (along with a seat belt) is intended to protect the operator in the event of an accidental rollover.

3. Do not mow when children are near. It takes only a fraction of a second for a child to run into a mower's path. Prevent injury by supervising children and pets inside the home while someone is mowing.

4. Extra care should be taken on hills, which can cause a loss of traction. Movements should be deliberate and steady, with no sudden changes in speed or direction. Hills with slopes greater than 15 degrees should always be avoided.

5. Use only a walk-behind mower or hand trimmer near retaining walls, drop-offs or water. A riding mower wheel could slip over the edge, or the ground could give way, causing the mower to roll over.