LEAF BLOWER SAFETY

INTRODUCTION

Leaf blowers use a small engine and a chute to either displace leaves and grass clippings, or grind them up and send them straight into a collection bag. Employees who use leaf blowers at work should be familiar with the safety steps that can be taken to prevent accidents.

HAZARDS

Hazards of using a leaf blower incorrectly may include:

- Cuts
- Bruises
- Pinch point injuries
- Eye injuries from projectile debris
- Hearing Loss
- Choking or coughing on loose debris and dust

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Employees operating leaf blowers should protect themselves with the following clothing:

- Sturdy shoes
- Work gloves
- Eye protection
- Hearing Protection
- Dust mask as necessary

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SAFE WORK PRACTICES

To avoid being injured when using a leaf blower, employees must follow all of the safety guidelines as outlined by the manufacturer in the operator's manual. These safety steps may include:

- Quickly inspect the leaf blower before use to make sure there is no visible damage, and all controls and safety devices are working properly.
- Never pointing a leaf blower in the direction of people or pets.
    - Always pay attention to where the discharge chute is pointing.
- All other personnel should stay a considerable distance away when a leaf blower is being operated. Turn off the leaf blower if you are approached.
- Leaf blowers should only be operated outside or in well-ventilated areas.
- Do not modify leaf blowers in any way.
- Employees should never operate leaf blowers from a ladder, rooftop, tree or other unstable surface. Leaf blower nozzle attachments can be used to reach high places.
- If you will be operating a gasoline-powered leaf blower, make sure that the proper gas is used and is stored correctly when done. Never smoke when handling fuel.
- Do not use a leaf blower to clean up gravel, cement dust, or any hazardous substances.
- Always turn the leaf blower off and store properly when leaving it unattended.
- Never use a leaf blower if you are tired, sick, or under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

CONCLUSION

Leaf blowers can be a safe tool that will save hours of time raking if all of the safety guidelines are followed. Employees should understand the hazards involved, wear the appropriate personal protective equipment, and follow all of the necessary safety guidelines.