

Using Snowblowers Safely

Every winter, approximately 6,000 people nationwide are treated in emergency rooms for injuries suffered while using snowblowers. The majority of these injuries seem to concentrate during early, heavy snows. The Toro Company offers these tips to keep you safe while clearing snow.

- Become familiar with your machine. Read and understand the operator's manual. Leave all of the safety features intact. Check your snowblower every time before you use it and re-familiarize yourself with it before the using it at the start of the season.
- Always keep hands and feet away from all moving parts of the machine. If the machine clogs while removing snow, shut the machine off and wait for all moving parts to stop. Some manufacturers recommend removing the spark plug wire from the spark plug. Remove snow with a stick or instrument. Be prepared for a clogged machine to jump once the obstruction has been cleared!
- Work the snow slowly. There is less chance of clogging if you do not rush the job.
- Never leave a running machine unattended. Never refuel the machine while it is running or if the engine is hot. There is also a risk for burns, as parts of the machine, especially the engine and the muffler, become extremely hot.
- Before beginning to remove snow, make sure that the area is clear. Some machines are capable of throwing snow at distances of 30' or greater. Such machines can also propel rocks or other objects at great velocity. Take special care to discharge snow away from people, buildings, or vehicles. If you use an electric snowblower, be aware of the location of the power cord.
- Wear adequate winter clothing while clearing snow. Being outdoors during the winter always carries the risk of frostbite and hypothermia. Dress in layers and wear boots that have good traction on slippery surfaces. Avoid long scarves and outerwear with strings that may become entangled in the moving parts of the machine.
- Only adults or mature teens should operate the machine, and even mature teens should be supervised.
- Concentration is the key to safe operation of a snowblower. Avoid the use of alcohol or other drugs, and do not work when you are angry or depressed. Do not wear headphones; you need to be keenly aware of your surroundings.

LOSS CONTROL FELLOWSHIP

For more information, contact your local Hartford agent or your Hartford Loss Control Consultant. Visit The Hartford's Loss Control web site at <http://www.thehartford.com/corporate/losscontrol/>

The information provided in these materials is intended to be general and advisory in nature. It shall not be considered legal advice. The Hartford does not warrant that the implementation of any view or recommendation contained herein will: (i) result in the elimination of any unsafe conditions at your business locations or with respect to your business operations; or (ii) will be an appropriate legal or business practice. The Hartford assumes no responsibility for the control or correction of hazards or legal compliance with respect to your business practices, and the views and recommendations contained herein shall not constitute our undertaking, on your behalf or for the benefit of others, to determine or warrant that your business premises, locations or operations are safe or healthful, or are in compliance with any law, rule or regulation. Readers seeking to resolve specific safety, legal or business issues or concerns related to the information provided in these materials should consult their safety consultant, attorney or business advisors. All information and representations herein are as of March 2009.

Using Snowblowers Safely (19194)

© Mar. 2009 The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc., Hartford, CT 06155 All Rights Reserved