

ROADSIDE MOWING SAFETY TIPS

Mechanized mowing is an effective and efficient way to improve sight distance at intersections and curves. It is one of several approved methods for controlling the height of roadside vegetation and preventing the growth and spread of prohibited weeds and other undesirable plant growth.

However, to keep the operator and others safe while mowing, it is imperative that certain steps are taken before beginning a mowing activity each day as well as while performing the actual mowing. The following checklists provide safety guidelines for roadside mowing operations.



Pre-Startup Safety Checklist:

- Read and understand the owner's operating manual provided by the equipment manufacturer.
- Make sure tires and wheels are properly ballasted. This is especially important when mowing steep grades or using a boom mower.
- Inspect the equipment's safety features, rollover protection, seatbelts, safety guards and shields, slow-moving warning signs, and lights.
- Inspect the mower for missing or broken mowing blades.
- Tighten mowing blade retention nuts and bolts daily or more frequently as recommended by the manufacturer.
- Make sure the operator is wearing all recommended personal protective equipment:
 - Hardhat
 - Safety glasses/goggles
 - Hearing protection
 - Safety vest
 - Gloves
 - Mask or respirator for dry/dusty conditions
- Ensure proper work area signage as required by PennDOT Publication 213.
- Confirm availability of a shadow vehicle and operator if needed.
- Inspect the area to be mowed for washouts and debris.

Operational Safety Checklist:

- Wear and use all required personal protective equipment.
- Make sure you are both physically and mentally prepared to operate the equipment.
- Refrain from using alcohol or medications that could impair judgment while operating the equipment.
- Follow all safety warnings listed in the owner's manual for the equipment.
- Never deactivate safety devices installed by the manufacturer.
- Always shut down the equipment before performing maintenance or repairs.
- Always mow with traffic.
- Never mow over or through debris.
- Work carefully around washouts.
- Angle the mower deck so that the front is one inch higher than the back, to make sure any debris that is struck will be forced downward and forward.
- While mowing, watch for signs, tree limbs, and other obstacles that could strike the operator.
- Use extreme caution when mowing wet areas since this could result in equipment losing traction, getting stuck, or turning over.
- Never attempt to mow on a slope steeper than 3:1.
- Never allow riders on the mower (one seatbelt = one operator).
- Monitor the health of the operator and others involved in the mowing operation for possible heat-related illnesses.