

# safety Toolbox Talks for matters

From your safety partners at Buffalo Ridge Insurance

## Snow Blower Safety

Snow removal can be hard on the body when you have to clear a large area with only a shovel, especially after a heavy snow. Using a snow blower may be the perfect way to give your back a break. However, it is important to take the proper safety precautions to avoid unnecessary injury while clearing snow this winter.

### Dress for the Job

Clearing snow can be a cold job. Dress properly not only to keep yourself warm, but also to keep yourself safe.

- Wear boots that will give you adequate traction while walking behind the blower.
- Wear gloves that allow you to firmly grip the snow blower and do not interfere with its operation.
- Wear eye protection.
- Avoid long scarves or other loose clothing that could become caught in the snow blower's moving parts during servicing or operation.

### Before Use

Go through these steps before you begin to clear snow:

- Familiarize yourself with the snow blower's operations manual.
- Inspect the area that you are about to clear. Look for things that may be

hidden under the snow like doormats or newspapers.

- Check the snow blower's oil level before each use.
- Never start the snow blower indoors. If you are in a garage, make sure the door is open before you start the machine.

### Clearing Snow

While running the snow blower:

- Be aware of where you are aiming the shoot. Rocks and ice can become dangerous missiles if picked up by the blower.
- Never blow snow toward people or cars.
- Keep your hands and feet away from all moving parts.
- Never override automatic shutoff features.
- Do not operate the snow blower on a steep incline.
- Operate the blower at a speed no faster than a walk.

### Clogs and Jams

If something becomes stuck in the snow blower:

**It isn't hard to stay safe while clearing snow. Taking simple safety precautions will help you avoid unnecessary injury this winter.**



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- Turn the machine off and wait until all moving parts have stopped before attempting to fix anything.
- Never reach into the blower shoot with your hands for any reason, even if the machine is off. Use a stick to work any debris out of the shoot.

## **Proper Maintenance Counts**

Proper snow blower maintenance is important to ensure smooth operation.

- Always add fresh fuel and oil at the start of each season; also, check the spark plug.
- If you are using an electric snow blower or an electric start for a gas-powered blower, make sure any power cords being used are in good condition
- Maintain proper tire pressure to provide the best handling.
- Run all of the fuel out of the snow blower before storing it at the end of each season.