



# fast facts

advancing safety, health, and workplace rights in the legislative branch

## Grounds/Landscaping

July 2010



Landscaping and horticultural service workers are at risk of injury from a wide variety of potential hazards in this industry. Risks include exposure to chemicals, noise, machinery, lifting, construction, and weather related hazards. Approximately 13,000 injury or illness cases are reported in the Horticulture and Landscaping industry each year, according to OSHA Office of Statistical Analysis compilation of BLS data. As such, horticulture and landscape is one of the seven industries selected as part of OSHA's strategic management plan.

There are several hazards known to cause injuries associated with grounds and landscaping work. The most common are found in the table below.

Classifications:	Task Associated with Hazards:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lifting &amp; Awkward Postures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manual handling of landscaping tools and materials.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electrical Hazards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working in proximity to overhead power lines, as well as in wet or damp locations.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Noise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Powered equipment such as chainsaws, mowers, trimmers, chippers, and trenchers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heat/Cold Stress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working for extended periods of time outdoors in all seasons.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slips / Trips / Falls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working from bucket trucks, working in trees.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motor Vehicles / Equipment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working around traffic, motor vehicles, heavy equipment, and overhead hazards.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sharp and/or Rotating blades, flying debris</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working around rotating blades, chippers, shredders, trimmers, chainsaws, mowers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pesticides / Chemical Exposure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working with pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, gasoline, batteries.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trenching / Excavations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluating soil conditions, verifying utility locations, constructing protective systems, providing safe access/egress.</li> </ul>



A proactive safety and health program is essential to prevent worker injuries and illnesses in this multifaceted industry. Depending upon the activities involved, landscaping and horticultural work may fall under OSHA's General Industry and/or Construction Industry standards. Training can prove challenging due to the broad range of topics that need to be covered to protect landscaping and grounds crews. Language barriers may also hinder the training's effectiveness.



*Lawn and Landscape Maintenance:* This activity includes such tasks as mowing, pruning, chipping, fertilizing, leaf blowing, pest control, and providing safe transport for crew to and from the job site.

Common Injuries:	Preventions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cuts and amputations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep clear of rotating mower and brush-cutting blades.</li> <li>Maintain saws and cutting equipment in serviceable condition.</li> <li>Don't wear loose clothing around chippers.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hand injuries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear gloves.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chemical exposure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) and follow precautions. Implement an effective Hazard Communication program that includes employee training.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eye injury</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear protective goggles when using blowers, mowers, etc.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hearing loss</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear ear protection when using power equipment.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sprains and Strains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain comfortable mower settings for the worker. Use safe-lifting techniques. Use mechanical means or gain assistance to lift, whenever possible.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicle accidents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train drivers and maintain vehicles in serviceable condition.</li> <li>Train drivers to watch for pedestrians and vehicular traffic.</li> </ul>



*Tree Care:* Tree care includes activities such as pruning, chipping and removal, plant health care, cabling, bracing, transplanting, and fertilizing. Many hazards in the tree care industry are potentially fatal. Exposure to overhead power lines, falling branches and tools, and chainsaw use are just a few of the dangers.

Common Injuries:	Preventions/Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Struck by falling debris, cars, lighting, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use PPE (e.g. hard hat)/know drop zone.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cuts and amputations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train safe chainsaw use and wear chaps.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eye damage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear safety goggles.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ear damage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wear ear protection for chipping, chainsaw, and other power equipment.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electrocution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comply with the 10-foot power line clearance rule (10 feet + 4 inches for every 10kV over 50 kV).</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slips, trips and falls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use proper PPE and appropriate tie-ins (in tree, bucket, or aerial platform).</li> </ul>

## fast stats

### *Frequently Cited Standards*

The following standards, in order, were the most frequently cited by Federal OSHA from October 2008 through September 2009, in *Landscape and Horticultural Services* Industry Group ([SIC Code 078](#)).

[1910.67](#), Vehicle-mounted elevating and rotating work platforms

[1910.132](#), General requirements (personal protective equipment)

[1910.1200](#), Hazard communication

[1910.133](#), Eye and face protection

[1910.135](#), Head protection

[Section 5\(a\)\(1\)](#) of the OSH Act, often referred to as the General Duty Clause

[1910.212](#), Machinery and Machine Guarding, General Requirements for all Machines

[1910.333](#), Electrical – Selection and use of safe Work Practices

[1910.134](#), Respiratory protection

[1910.95](#), Occupational noise exposure

#### *General Industry Standards*

29 § CFR 1910 Subparts:

- D (Walking-working surfaces);
- H (Hazardous Materials);
- I (Personal protective equipment);
- J (General environmental controls);
- K (Medical and first aid);
- N (Materials handling and storage);
- P (Hand and portable powered tools and other hand-held equipment);
- R (Special industries);
- S (Electrical); and
- Z (Toxic and hazardous substances)

#### *Construction Industry Standards*

29 § CFR 1926 Subparts:

- C (General safety and health provisions);
- D (Occupational health and environmental controls);
- E (Personal protective and life saving equipment);
- I (Tools – hand and power);
- K (Electrical), L (Scaffolds);
- M (Fall protection);
- N (Cranes, derricks, hoists, elevators, and conveyors);
- O (Motor vehicles, mechanical equipment, and marine operations);
- P (Excavations);
- W (Rollover protective structures, overhead protection); and
- X (Ladders)



If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Compliance:

Room LA 200, John Adams Building  
110 Second Street, SE  
Washington, D.C. 20540  
t/ 202-724-9250  
tdd/ 202-426-1912  
f/ 202-426-1913

Peter Ames Eveleth  
General Counsel

Mary-Margaret Smith  
Editor

[Download the entire Fast Facts suite at http://www.compliance.gov](http://www.compliance.gov)

The Office of Compliance advances safety, health, and workplace rights in the U.S. Congress and the Legislative Branch. Established as an independent agency by the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, the Office educates employees and employing offices about their rights and responsibilities under the Act, provides an impartial dispute resolution process, and investigates and remedies violations of the Act.

This information does not constitute advice or an official ruling of the Office of Compliance or the Board of Directors and is intended for educational purposes only. For further information, please refer to the Congressional Accountability Act (2 U.S.C. 1301 et seq.) and the regulations issued by the Board, or you may contact the Office of Compliance.