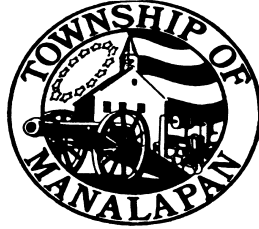


# Township of Manalapan

## BOARD OF HEALTH

120 Route 522 • Manalapan, NJ 07726 • 732-446-8345 • Fax 732-446-1576

Website: [www.mtnj.org](http://www.mtnj.org)



## *Grass may cause injuries!*

For most people, mowing the lawn is either a chore or a relaxing time to work outdoors. For about 70,000 people this year, mowing the lawn will turn into a brush with death or serious injury. The statistics, from the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission, are harrowing: Each year 800 children are run over by riding mowers or small tractors; 75 people are killed, and 20,000 injured; one in five deaths involves a child. Let's face it, lawnmowers are dangerous tools, but they are so common that people may not treat them seriously. Underneath the mower deck is a steel cutting blade spinning at more than 2000 revolutions per minute. Depending on its length, the blade tip may be moving at 200 mph. An injury from contacting the blade is not the only danger from a running mower. The blade speed can turn rocks, stick, or other debris into deadly projectiles. And don't forget, the mower engine itself gets hot enough to ignite gasoline or cause third-degree burns, the most serious kind. For riding mowers, other dangers include tipping the mower over on a hill, losing control of the mower, or accidentally backing over an object or person.

### **Here are safety tips when mowing the lawn**

- Make sure your mower is in good condition. Look it over before each use; when something breaks, have it repaired. A poorly running mower may lead the operator to take unnecessary risks.
- Dress appropriately. Don't mow barefoot or in flip-flops. Wear good shoes that provide traction, safety glasses, and close fitting clothes that can't be caught in a gear or engine.
- Never run the mower without its safety equipment. Most walk-behind mowers come with a dead-man switch, which shuts the mower off and applies a blade brake when the operator releases the handle. Don't remove this switch or tie it down. Mowers also come with a guard on

the discharge chute. This guard, usually plastic, directs the mower discharge down into the ground. When the mower strikes a rock, the chute can keep it from breaking a window or striking a person. If the chute clogs while you are mowing, shut the mower off and use a stick to clear it. Then, raise the mower deck or wait until the grass dries out before continuing. Never tie the chute up. If you need to fill up the gas tank, shut off the mower and let it cool before filling the tank. Take a break and get some water before filling; if you've run the tank dry, you'll need it.

- Before you mow, check the lawn for loose objects that could turn into a projectile if struck. When mowing a slope with a riding mower, mow up and down the slope to prevent tipping over. If you are using a walk-behind, mow across the slope to avoid slipping under the mower
- Look out for others, especially children. Make sure children, pets, and others are a safe distance from the mower. Children can unexpectedly dart into the mowing path or fail to move when the mower is backing up toward them.
- Use safety glasses when mowing grass. Bits of grass, dirt, leaves and other objects can be discharged from the mower, rebound off adjacent buildings, and fences and hit your face. Glasses also protect your eyes on windy days. Carry snug-fitting leather gloves for the purpose of removing plugged grass or making adjustments to the mower.
- Always mow when grass is dry. Wet grass can cause your feet to slip. The mower can also slip in wet conditions. If you slip, your feet and legs can come in contact with the mower's blades, causing injury or loss of limbs. Wet grass can also clog the mower!
- Never leave the mower unattended while the engine is running!

For more information contact the Manalapan Township Health Department:

**Hours:**

Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

**Location:**

Manalapan Town Hall

120 Route 522 & Taylors Mills Road, Manalapan, NJ 07726

**Phone:** (732) 446-8345

**Fax:** (732) 446-1576