

MODULE 3-09 WEED EATER, GRASS TRIMMER AND WALK BEHIND BRUSH CUTTER

ALL EMPLOYEES ARE TO BE TRAINED PRIOR TO USING EQUIPMENT

Purpose

Providing clean, well-maintained facilities is an essential function of OPRD’s mission and part of the Centennial Horizon goals of world-class visitor experiences. The use of gas-powered equipment, such as a grass trimmers and brush cutters, helps keep landscapes, trails and campsites clean, safe and well maintained. Gas-powered grass trimmers and brush cutters require an ability to walk over uneven surfaces, use job hazard analysis to identify worksite dangers, and use equipment and materials safely according to OPRD and manufacturer instructions. The purpose of operating any equipment in Oregon Parks is to accomplish the business of the State while protecting visitors, employees, and volunteers.



Jasper’s Stihl Weed & Grass Trimmer (GAS & Oil Mix)

Significant Environmental Aspects

OPRD has developed an Environmental Management System (EMS). Information about the EMS and other completed training modules included in the EMS can be located on the “R” Drive at: R:\Environmental Management System. Those activities and operations that may have significant environmental impact have been identified and included in the EMS. Operation of gas-powered equipment, such as a grass trimmer, has the potential for significant environmental impact involving: vehicle and engine use, non-hazardous waste, potentially hazardous waste, and air quality. Operators of gas-powered equipment should choose the most efficient equipment to perform assigned tasks.

I. Pre-Operation

A. **Operator’s Manual** – Read prior to using equipment.

B. **Inspection/Service**

- **Fill fuel tank** With two-cycle gas at correct manufacturer's ratio.
- **Do not fill tank in a bed of a pickup with a plastic bed liner. Static electricity may ignite the fuel.**
- **Check** guards, fuel level, oil, string or blade length, and spark plug. Lubricate fittings.
- **Tighten** nuts and bolts.
- **Check tool bag** for the correct tools such as extra blades/string, wrench, spark plugs.
- **Pre-start** grass trimmer before leaving shop. If the motor does not start by 10th



“JAWS,” the Troy Built walk behind grass trimmer. at Wallowa Lake

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pull, do not use. Once trimmer has started, **turn the choke off**. See start procedures in operators manual.

- **Red tag** any tools or non-energized equipment requiring replacement or repair and remove from service.
- **Lockout/Tag-out (LO/TO)** any energized tools or equipment if repairs are needed, in accordance with Procedure Module 09-04, Lockout/Tag-out.

II. Sustainable Operation

- A. **Equipment Choice** – Look for alternatives to two-cycle engines. If a gas-powered engine is required, use the most efficient equipment.
- B. **Maintenance** – Proper maintenance of gas-powered equipment helps increase fuel efficiency and reduces air pollution.
- C. **Chemical Use** – Where possible use low-smoke oil and bio-based lubricants.
- D. **Waste Disposal** – Properly dispose of all petroleum-based waste according to park procedures or waste management plan.

III. Operation

A. Starting

- **PPE** – Put on hearing and eye protection.
- **Starting Switch** - Move to the ON position.
- **Choke** - Move carburetor choke to the on position.
- **Prime** - Prime carburetor if string trimmer has a priming bulb.
- **Starting Position** - Place cutting string in a position where it will not make contact with people or objects.
- **Start** - Pull rope starter.

Walk behind brush cutter



B. Support Kit - The trimmer support kit that accompanies the operator includes:

- Wrenches/screwdriver
- Spark plug
- Blade/cutting string.
- Pre-mixed fuel

C. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- **Hand Protection** - Leather or vibration dampening gloves.
- **Eye Protection** - Face shield and safety glasses.
- **Hearing Protection** – Ear plugs/muffs.
- **Head Protection** - A hard hat is required if debris may be thrown or there are overhead hazards.

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D. Site Assessment Perform a site hazard assessment prior to cutting. The site assessment should include:

- **Visitors/Vehicles** - Cut debris away from, rather than towards people and property. If cutting head is throwing debris towards pedestrians or personal property, release the throttle until they pass by, or **STOP** work in that area until it is safe to work there.
- **EVERY YEAR WE HAVE FLYING ROCKS THAT DAMAGE EQUIPMENT, OR HIT PEOPLE. PLEASE BE CONSIDERATE OF OUR VISITORS, STAFF, VEHICLES, ANIMALS AND PROPERTY.**
- **Terrain** – Watch for rocks, holes, and rough ground. Never assume that there is no debris or rocks in the area to be cut down.
- **Dust** - If dust is created, a particulate mask should be used.



The only difference between portable weed eaters/grass trimmers and brush cutters can be the nylon line or cutting blade on the end of the machine. Grass trimmer on left, brush cutter on right.

E. Operation Includes:

- Wear appropriate shoes and clothing, long pants and long-sleeve shirt, no tennis shoes, thongs, sandals.
- Adjust shoulder harness to keep trimmer off the ground.
- Grass trimmer operation that results in personal injury or property damage may result in disciplinary action. **Take this process seriously.**
- Operate by a slight, controlled, swinging motion from side to side.
- Maintain constant visual attention to the blade or string.
- If cutting head becomes clogged up with debris, shut it off before cleaning out.
- Avoid debarking of desired shrubs and trees.
- Keep cutting head off the ground to reduce throwing material.
- Do not use a trimmer for more than two hours at a time without changing to another task.
- Cutting head may be tapped on the ground to advance cutting string, if using tap



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& feed grass trimmer.



High wheeled grass trimmer from Fort Stevens and a man-pack grass trimmer from Southern Willamette.

Note industrial grade, heavy-weight line on is installed on both machines. These machines can cut through small trees, brush or your co-worker's leg!

Flying debris can bounce off trees, rocks fly,... windshields crack, people get rocks imbedded in their legs, you get debris in your eyes...be careful!

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IV. Post-Operation

A. Clean Up, Hazard Warnings, Storage

- Clean up area where trimming was done.
- Place hazard signs/tape to identify any park hazard for the safety of staff and visitors.
- Clean and inspect tools and equipment for damage or needed maintenance.
- Red Tag any non-energized tools or equipment damaged during work project.
- Complete Lockout/Tag-out process for any energized tools or equipment damaged during work.
- Schedule repairs or replacement on damaged tools or equipment.

V. Demonstration of Proficiency

Anyone trained to use a grass trimmer is required to demonstrate proficiency prior to signing training ledger.

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MODULE 3-09 WEED EATER, GRASS TRIMMER AND WALK BEHIND BRUSH CUTTER TEST QUESTIONS

I. Multiple Choice:

1. As part of the inspection/service prior to operating the grass trimmer, you need to:
 - a) Make sure it is clean.
 - b) Talk to the person who used it last to see how it was running.
 - c) Check the tool bag to make sure everything you need is in it.
 - d) All of the above.
 - e) None of the above.
2. You should _____ before operating the trimmer.
 - a) Tighten nuts and bolts.
 - b) Pre-start before leaving shop.
 - c) Fill fuel tank.
 - d) Check guards, oil, blade/string length and spark plug.
 - e) All of the above.
3. If the motor does not start by the 10th pull, you should:
 - a) Return it to the shop.
 - b) Tear it apart to see what is wrong.
 - c) Lockout and tag it out for repair and return it to the shop.
 - d) Go get another trimmer and throw away the old one.
4. Your support kit should have everything but:

a) Wrenches and screwdrivers	c) Spark plug
b) Extra Blade or cutting nylon string	d) Pre-mixed fuel
	e) Heavy duty rope



II. True/False:

5. _____ You don't need to pre-start the equipment before you leave the shop.
6. _____ To start the trimmer, set the cutting head on the ground on loose gravel.
7. _____ You only need safety glasses when using the trimmer or brush cutter.
8. _____ Rocks and debris from a trimmer can cause harm to people and property.
9. _____ When operating the trimmer, use a slight swing motion from side to side.
10. _____ When operating the trimmer or brush cutter, you must maintain a constant visual attention to the blade/string and where the debris is being thrown.

III. Discussion Questions:

1. What personal hazards are present when operating a grass trimmer?
2. What do you need to be aware of when operating a grass trimmer around shrubs and trees?

Employee Name: _____ Pass ____ No Pass ____ Date: _____

Take this test to your supervisor or trainer for sign off.