

## **Landscape Safety Series: Using String Trimmers Safely<sup>1</sup>**

Lance Fluegel and Bradley Rein<sup>2</sup>

### **BEFORE USING THE TRIMMER**

- Read the owner's manual carefully.
- Wear proper protective clothing: eye protection, trim-fitting pants and shirt, sturdy shoes, and ear protection if using a gas-powered trimmer.
- Check the machine for loose, broken, or damaged parts -- repair or replace as needed.
- Be sure electric units are either double insulated or connected to a 3-prong grounded outlet.
- Use a properly sized outdoor type extension cord for electric units. A 2-wire cord for double insulated units and a 3-wire cord for units that need to be grounded. Use of a ground fault interrupter (GFI) circuit provides added safety.
- Do not use electrical powered units in damp or wet conditions.
- Be sure the working area is free of hazards, which could hamper the use of the trimmer.
- Trimmers can throw objects with force so keep children, bystanders, and pets from the working area.

### **WHILE OPERATING THE TRIMMER**

- Do not operate the trimmer near windows.
- Keep the trimmer close but not touching the ground. Angle the unit slightly to the left to discharge trimmings away from your body.
- Hold the trimmer firmly with both hands in a properly balanced stance.
- Keep the hot engine and exhaust away from your body.
- Use only monofilament string recommended by the manufacturer. Never use wire or metal reinforced string as broken pieces can become lethal missiles.

- Do not use the trimmer for any purpose other than manufacturer's recommendations.
- Never touch the string while in operation.
- Do not operate gas powered units indoors to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Stop the engine and disconnect spark plug wire before servicing. Disconnect the power cord on electric units.
- Refuel only with engine stopped and cool.

### **WHEN FINISHED**

- Store the unit in an area where children or untrained personnel will not have access.

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