Use of String Trimmers

1. Protective Equipment and Proper Clothing

   a) Always wear a safety face shield and safety glasses when operating the string or cord trimmer. Always wear a dust mask if working in an area where the trimmer will raise dust.

   b) Wear heavy, long pants, boots, and gloves to protect your hands. Do not wear loose clothing, jewelry, short pants, and sandals or go barefoot.

   c) Secure hair so it is above shoulder length.

   d) Wear hearing protection—ear plugs and/or muffs.

   NOTE: Being fully covered will help protect you from pieces of flying objects and plants debris that are thrown by the trimmer head. Flying objects (e.g., animal excretion, Wedelia, etc.) could present a greater hazard than the object/plant would be when left undisturbed.

2. Trimmer Pre-Check and Repair Cautions

   a) Inspect the entire trimmer before each use for damaged parts and fuel leaks. Ensure all fasteners are in place and secure.

   b) Make sure the trimmer head is properly installed and securely fastened.

   c) Cut the engine and disconnect the spark plug wire when making repairs and modifications to the trimmer.

3. Operational Cautions

   a) Do not operate the trimmer when you are tired, ill or under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication.

   b) Always start the engine on firm ground in an open place, securing the trimmer with one hand and one knee or foot, while maintaining good balance and footing. Never start or run the engine inside a closed room or building. Breathing exhaust fumes can cause illness, injury, or death.

   c) Before starting the job, check the area for hidden obstacles such as rocks, sticks, wires or cords, which could be picked up and thrown or entangled by the spinning nylon lines.

   d) Always keep engine on the right hand side of your body.

   e) Hold the trimmer firmly with both hands when it is running.
f) Keep firm footing and balance. Do not over-reach.

g) Keep trimmer head below waist level.

h) Do not raise the engine above your waist. The trimmer head can come dangerously close to your body.

i) Keep all parts of your body away from the trimmer head and muffler when engine is running.

j) Hand carry the trimmer with the engine stopped and the muffler away from your body.

k) Never use “blades” with a trimmer designed for trimmer use only.

l) Never cut small, flexible branches, brush, or shrubbery with a string trimmer. This type of growth is too thick for nylon line to cut. Instead, use an axe, a brush cutter, hand pruners, hand hedge clippers, a hedge trimmer, or loppers.

m) Do not walk backwards or sideways while operating the trimmer. Always walk forward as you trim.

n) Remember the trimmer line can throw objects violently. The HAZARD ZONE IS 60 FEET. Keep people and animals a minimum of 30 feet away. Others can be blinded or injured.

4. Dispute Resolution
Where there is disagreement with a building tenant or another employee causing a disruption in performing the work, the Groundskeeper I should stop operating the trimmer and report the disruption or disagreement to his/her working Supervisor so the work can be rescheduled and the matter resolved prior to resumption of the work. The working Supervisor or Supervisor should discuss the issue with Building tenant or parties to the dispute to reach a resolution.

If no resolution is reached, the dispute will be reported to the landscape manager for resolution.