



# Customer Focus on Loss Control

*Innovative Safety and Health Solutions<sup>SM</sup>*

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## Using Snowblowers Safely

Every winter, approximately 6,000 people nationwide are treated in emergency rooms for injuries suffered while using snowblowers. The majority of these injuries seem to concentrate during early, heavy snows. The Toro Company offers these tips to keep you safe while clearing snow.

- Become familiar with your machine. Read and understand the operator's manual. Leave all of the safety features intact. Check your snowblower every time before you use it and re-familiarize yourself with it before the using it at the start of the season.
- Always keep hands and feet away from all moving parts of the machine. If the machine clogs while removing snow, shut the machine off and wait for all moving parts to stop. Some manufacturers recommend removing the spark plug wire from the spark plug. Remove snow with a stick or instrument. Be prepared for a clogged machine to jump once the obstruction has been cleared!
- Work the snow slowly. There is less chance of clogging if you do not rush the job.
- Never leave a running machine unattended. Never refuel the machine while it is running or if the engine is hot. There is also a risk for burns, as parts of the machine, especially the engine and the muffler, become extremely hot.
- Before beginning to remove snow, make sure that the area is clear. Some machines are capable of throwing snow at distances of 30' or greater. Such machines can also propel rocks or other objects at great velocity. Take special care to discharge snow away from people, buildings, or vehicles. If you use an electric snowblower, be aware of the location of the power cord.
- Wear adequate winter clothing while clearing snow. Being outdoors during the winter always carries the risk of frostbite and hypothermia. Dress in layers and wear boots that have good traction on slippery surfaces. Avoid long scarves and outerwear with strings that may become entangled in the moving parts of the machine..
- Only adults or mature teens should operate the machine, and even mature teens should be supervised.
- Concentration is the key to safe operation of a snowblower. Avoid the use of alcohol or other drugs, and do not work when you are angry or depressed. Do not wear headphones; you need to be keenly aware of your surroundings.

