Landscaper – Fact Sheets



WHAT DOES A LANDSCAPER DO?

Under the label “landscaper” we are referring to gardeners, greenskeepers, lawn care specialists and horticultural workers. They can work in businesses or homes, indoors or outdoors. Landscapers usually work for a landscaping company, or as a municipal employee maintaining city parks.

Some of the main duties of a landscaper are to:

- Plan, create and maintain landscaped environments, which may include flowers, plants, trees, lawns, fences, decks, patios or water features.
- Prepare and spray chemical mixtures using various types of equipment.
- Operate powered equipment and hand tools.

What are some health and safety issues for landscapers?

Depending on exact occupation or geographic location, the following are possible risks:

- Exposure to infectious human and animal waste.
- Irritation or allergic reaction from plants, or from insect bites or stings.
- West Nile virus, Lyme disease or rocky mountain spotted fever.
- Histoplasmosis from bird droppings.
- Hantavirus from mouse droppings.
- Exposure to pesticides and other hazardous products.
- Pain or injury from working in awkward positions, lifting and carrying heavy objects.
- Noise.
- Exposure to extreme temperatures and weather (e.g., lightning).
- Driving, including use of mobile devices, and driving in winter.
- Exposure to UV radiation (risk of skin cancer from sunlight).
- Work with landscaping machinery, manual and power tools, chainsaws, and ladders.
- Working near electrical lines.
- Working with flammable products (e.g., fuel).
- Stress.
- Working alone.

What are some preventive measures for landscapers?

- Wash your hands frequently.
- Remove contaminated clothing and footwear to avoid transferring chemicals to your home or other “clean” spaces.
- Wash contaminated items before re-wearing or discarding.
- Read the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) for each chemical used.
- Keep your limbs covered to avoid insect bites.
- Protect yourself from the sun and from extreme heat or cold.
- Learn safe lifting techniques.
- Wear appropriate personal protective equipment.
- Know how to safely use equipment and tools.

What are some good general safe work practices?

- Practice safe lifting techniques.
- Work safely with equipment, tools, and ladders.
- Follow SDS recommendations when working with chemicals.
- Follow safety procedures when working with:
    - pesticides or other products
    - power tools and other equipment
    - ladders
    - machinery including lawnmowers, vehicles, chainsaws, etc.
- Use, maintain and store personal protective equipment according to manufacturers’ recommendations.
- Stay hydrated to avoid heat stress.
- Know the signs of an insect bite and how to identify ticks.
- Follow company safety rules.
- Know how to report a hazard.
- Follow good housekeeping procedures.

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