

# Safety Matters

## Landscaping

Provided by: Risk Management Advisors

### Working Near Roads

As a landscaping employee, many of your job tasks might require you to work close to roadways. Working near roads comes with significant hazards, such as the risk of getting severely injured—or even killed—by oncoming traffic.

In fact, recent research from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found that over half of all roadway work zone fatalities are caused by a worker being struck by a moving vehicle or mobile equipment. With this in mind, it's crucial that you play your part in preventing such incidents by following proper safety precautions. Be sure to follow these rules when working near roads.

#### Before You Begin

Prior to starting any landscaping tasks near roads, utilize these safety preparation steps:

- Be sure to set up cones and post warning signage throughout the work area to signal your presence to oncoming traffic.
- In the event that any landscaping tasks must be completed on the road, it's important to have someone act as a flagger to safely direct oncoming traffic around the work area. If you are responsible for being a flagger within your work area, make sure you are properly trained and qualified for this role. Depending on the state you are working in, there are [specific requirements](#) for being a flagger.
- Confirm that you have all the personal protective equipment (PPE) necessary to perform the task at hand. Further, ensure

that you know how to use all PPE correctly.

- Identify potential hazards to watch out for in the work area. This might include:
  - Slippery slopes or steep hills that could cause you to lose control while operating equipment and accidentally move into traffic
  - Work materials, tools or equipment that could become projectiles and strike nearby employees, oncoming vehicles or pedestrians
- Review all company safety policies, protocols and training resources regarding working near roads—including any traffic-control plans. Ask questions if you don't understand something.

#### While You Work

As you conduct any landscaping tasks near roads, keep these precautions in mind:

- Complete tasks as far as you can from the road's edge. Avoid standing in the road as much as possible. If it's necessary for you to stand in the road during a task, have another worker stand in a safe location nearby where they can detect oncoming traffic and tell you to move if needed.



- Be cautious when working with or near mobile equipment (e.g., a lawn mower). If you are working near an equipment operator, make eye contact, use a hand signal or verbally communicate with the operator before crossing their path. If you are operating mobile equipment, always pay close attention to your surroundings and follow designated travel paths on-site.
- Avoid using tools or equipment in a way that could result in projecting materials toward oncoming traffic—such as a leaf blower sending leaves into the road. Never leave tools or equipment in the road or anywhere that could potentially block traffic—always store these items in a safe, secure location after use.
- Stay alert at all times, and don't turn your back to approaching vehicles or pedestrians. Rather, always face oncoming traffic. It's extremely dangerous to assume that drivers or pedestrians will always be able to see you or avoid your path.

### Safety First

At , employee safety is our top priority. By following these best practices, you can help us foster a safe work environment, mitigate potential hazards and prevent accidents. If you have any questions about working near roads, talk to your supervisor.