

Risk Assessment



Area/Issue Being Assessed: Grass cutting with edging strimmer

Service:
Environmental &
Commercial
Services

Assessment Date: 2/10/23

Consultees:

Review Date:
October 2026

Assessor:

Post: Open
Space
Operations
Officer

Reviewer: 21.12.23

Post: Open Space
Manager

BACKGROUND:
ie, why is the assessment
being carried out?

Grass cutting works are carried out across a wide variety of Open Space settings including parks, schools, cemeteries housing areas and council house gardens either as programmed proactive maintenance or reactive maintenance. Edging strimmers are used to trim grass edges along cemetery paths where the edge is too deep for a mechanical edger to be used.

TASK #	DETAILS OF HAZARD, ie, how might someone be harmed?	PERSON(S) AFFECTED	EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES	ADDITIONAL MEASURES REQUIRED TO MINIMISE RISK	ACTION TAKEN (Initial and Date)
	Harm or injury from Work Equipment or Machinery. - Death, Severed arteries, amputation, lacerations, cuts, scrapes, eye injuries caused by - - Operatives may make contact with moving or non-moving blade/cord - Blade or strimmer head may come off through not being tight enough - Injury from debris/stones thrown from blade/cord	Operatives Public	- Only suitably trained operatives to use edging machine - Do not adjust blade/cord with engine running - Ensure spark plug disconnected when adjusting blade/cord tightness or cleaning machine - Correct PPE – gloves, hearing and eye protection - Ensure all guards are in place - Area of work to be cleared of any obvious obstacles/debris before cutting.		

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	Hazardous Chemicals - Prolonged or repeated exposure to petrol, two stroke oil may cause eye and skin irritation - Inhalation or ingestion of petrol, two stroke oil may cause respiratory tract irritation, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea - Contamination through spills over operatives - Environmental Spills	Operatives Environment	- Petrol to be stored in suitable containers. Although there is currently no International, European or British Standard for the storage of petrol in metal containers, a UN approved metal container meeting the performance requirements for the carriage of petrol under ADR would be considered robust for most storage conditions. - Two Stroke Oil to be kept in containers they are provided in. - Carry spill kits of absorbent granules in transport vehicles - Ensure equipment is well-maintained at all times and filler caps fit properly and are appropriately tightened. - Follow correct refuelling procedure MS 68.		
	Fire Explosion of petrol vapours during refuelling	Operatives	- Correct refuelling procedure followed as per refuelling MS 68. - No smoking. Shaded fuelling site a safe distance from any ignition source. Petrol to be stored in suitable containers. Although there is currently no International, European or British Standard for the storage of petrol in metal containers, a UN approved metal container meeting the performance requirements for the carriage of petrol under ADR would be considered robust for most storage conditions		
	Vibration - Operatives may experience high levels of vibration leading to Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) and Vibration White Finger. - Repetitive strain injury (RSI) (all accumulative over time) Operatives may experience hearing loss due to exposure to noise levels above 80 decibels	Operatives	- Purchasing decision with fleet to secure– lowest vibration possible - Regular maintenance carried out on edging machine - Regular breaks - Opportunity for work scheduling to allow for job rotation. - Average exposure times: 1 hour Refer to vibration exposure ready reckoner info - Hearing protection		

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	Burns - Contact with hot exhaust/engine area/exhaust gasses. - Burn or blast injuries due to explosion of petrol vapours during refuelling procedure.	Operatives	- Correct refuelling procedures followed as per MS 68 below - All operators trained and competent. - First aid kit carried in vehicles		
	Slips, Trips and Falls Operatives may experience injuries such as cuts, scrapes, bruising resulting from a slip, trip or fall due to uneven terrain	Operatives	- Area of work to be cleared of any obvious obstacles before cutting. - Dynamic risk assessment of site, taking note of hazardous areas and using caution accordingly - Appropriate footwear to be worn.		
	Manual handling Operatives may experience muscle strain (especially back) and muscular skeletal injuries while lifting strimmer on/off trailer or pick up	Operatives	- All operative to receive manual handling training - Vehicles parked as close as possible to work site and sides of van lowered.		
	Violence and Unacceptable Behaviour Operators may experience violence and aggression or verbal abuse from members of the public resulting in adverse mental health impact, poor moral.	Operatives	- Opportunity for Operators to postpone work and remove themselves from conversations with members of the public. - Operators provided with information cards to direct customers towards the Open Space pages on the Moray Council Website. - Recording form used to report incidents to Corporate H&S and HR.		

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	Lone working Team members may be exposed to hazards associated with working on their own including: - Increased risk of harm (identified above) from manual handling risk - increased risk of harm (as above) from falls from height - Increased risk of over exposure to HAV's and Noise - increased of experiencing unacceptable behaviour (as above). - Team members may find themselves in difficult situations or environments where help and assistance may not be close at hand. - Increased risk from instances of violence and aggression. - They may not be medically suited or the workplace itself may pose a particular risk to the worker.	Operatives	- Maintenance requiring two person/team lifting is scheduled for days when there is full team availability. Items made safe until this can be achieved. - Opportunity for work to be rescheduled for full team availability. Operatives work to their own individual exposure limits as discussed during health surveillance reviews following T3 appointments. Opportunity for increased job rotation and task rotation. - Work can be rescheduled if it is in a contentious area/known past incidents. - Team Members follow the lone working policy/procedure. Telephone provided and good signal range available to cover all areas - Work is outside in open spaces so opportunity for team member to make site safe and then remove themselves from site. Suitability for lone working discussed at ERDP.		
	Related Documents	Refuelling procedure MS68 Vibration exposure ready reckoner			

Use the separate Action Sheet if you want to complete and action plan for any additional measures required. The Action Sheet can be located on the Health & Safety pages on the corporate interchange site.