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ARIZONA LANDSCAPE
CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION



Safety Tips For Riding Mowers

Pay particular attention to the following safety points for riding mowers:

- Some riding mowers are designed by their manufacturer to be equipped with a roll-over protective structure (ROPS).
- If the mower does not have a ROPS, look for unused bolt holes or brackets near the seat or frame to see if the mower should be equipped with a ROPS. Do not operate any mower that was intended to be equipped with a ROPS without its ROPS in place. In many cases, retrofit kits are available. Contact the manufacturer to see if there is a kit for the mower you will be using.
- Mowers with a ROPS should also be equipped with a seat belt. Provide and use approved seat belt assemblies on all riding lawn mowers on which a ROPS has been installed.
- Where vertical clearance does not allow for a ROPS to be in the raised (active) position, the ROPS may be temporarily placed in the lowered (inactive) position. Also, workers should not wear a seat belt while operating a riding mower with the ROPS in the lowered position. Return the ROPS to the raised position as soon as the riding mower is in an area where the vertical clearance allows its use and reconnect the seat belt.
- Equip riding mowers with an operator presence control system that shuts off the blades when the operator dismounts the machine or rises out of the seat.
- Equip riding mowers with interlocks that ensure that the engine cannot start while the mower is in gear or if the blade is engaged. Inspect mowers to ensure that operator presence systems and all safety features are always in place and operable.
- Keep riding mowers in good working order, and inspect them periodically for an insecurely or incorrectly attached ROPS or seat belt.
- Mower operators should use a standard checklist to do a general inspection of the equipment before use. For example, the checklist should include checking the tire pressure and checking for missing or damaged guards, etc.
- Experienced service personnel should inspect riding mowers for the necessary safety features and overall maintenance at least annually. Only qualified personnel should service and repair riding mowers.



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