

Important Information

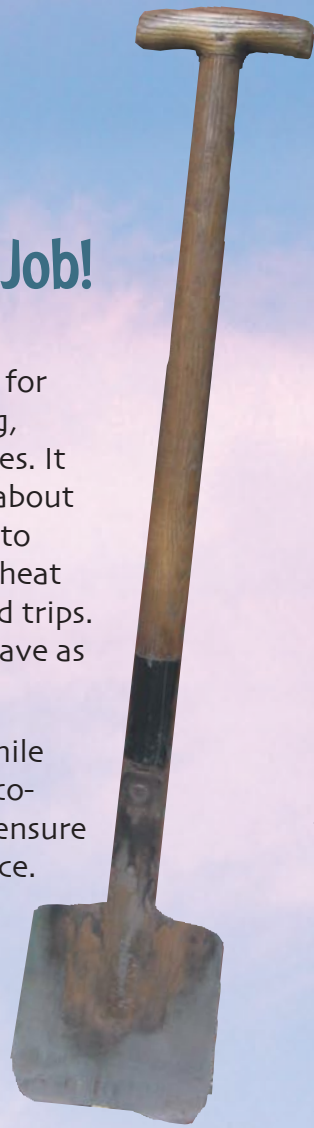
About Your Job!

This guide was created especially for young workers in the landscaping, greenhouse, and nursery industries. It provides important information about how to work safely, such as how to protect yourself from pesticides, heat stress, electrocution, and slips and trips. It also outlines what rights you have as a young worker.

Carry the guide in your pocket while you work and share it with your co-workers. Together, you can help ensure that your workplace is a safer place.

HOW OLD MUST I BE TO WORK IN LANDSCAPING, GREENHOUSES, OR NURSERIES?

- Generally you must be at least 16-years-old.
- You must be at least 17 to drive a motor vehicle on a public road or highway as part of your job.
- You must be 18-years-old to work as an "outside helper", riding on a motor vehicle outside the cab on any public road or highway.



- Because of the danger, you must be 18-years-old to operate a chainsaw, wood-chipper, and other dangerous machinery, and you should be trained on the safe use of the equipment.

HEAT STRESS

When you are working in hot weather, the heat can make you ill. Heat stress is serious—as the symptoms get worse, they become life-threatening.

Know the early signs of heat stress, which include: dizziness, headache, fatigue, and cramps. Fainting, rapid breathing, slurred speech, nausea, confusion, or convulsions are more serious signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

To avoid heat stress:

- Drink at least one cup of water every 15 minutes.
- Take breaks in a shady or cool area.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol.

At the first serious signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke:

- Call 911 or the local emergency number—this is a potentially life-threatening emergency!
- Cool down, get to a shady or cool area, remove extra clothing, and drink water.



PESTICIDES

Pesticides are used in landscaping, greenhouses and nurseries to kill pests and can be dangerous to humans.

- Wear work clothes that help protect you from pesticides, such as a hat, long sleeves, long pants, and sturdy shoes.
- You may not mix, load, apply, or handle pesticides unless your boss gives you special training and provides you with the protective equipment required on the label.
- If a pesticide is spilled or sprayed on you, wash yourself with soap and water, shampoo your hair, and put on clean clothes right away.
- If you begin to feel dizzy or sick to your stomach, or your eyes, skin, or throat burn, seek immediate medical care.
- Always wash work clothes separately from your family's laundry.

LIFTING

Use these tips when lifting:

- Ask for help before lifting a heavy or awkward load.
- Use dollies and hand trucks to move large or heavy items.
- Keep the load close to your body and directly in front of you.
- Avoid lifting objects from the ground. When possible store heavy items at waist level.



USE OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of on-the-job deaths. You can keep yourself safe if you:

- Always wear your seat belt.
- Always inspect your vehicle before driving. Make sure that trailers and equipment are properly secured.
- Always stay alert and keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you.
- Do not eat, use a cell phone, or do other things that distract you while driving.
- Avoid riding in the bed of a pick-up or other trucks. Never ride outside of the cab if you are under 18-years-old.

TRIMMERS & MOWERS

- Wear gloves, safety glasses, earplugs, and boots to protect yourself.
- Keep your hands and body away from rotating blades until the motor is off and the blades are at a complete stop.
- Pick up objects from the lawn before mowing to prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones.





NOISE

Hearing loss from noise is gradual, painless, and permanent but can be prevented. Wear earplugs or muffs when working with loud equipment.

SLIPS & TRIPS

It is easy to lose your balance when landscaping. Tips you can use to avoid slips and trips include:

- Do not run while on the job.
- Remove anything from the ground that could make you trip before you start the job.
- Wear sturdy boots or shoes with non-slip soles.

ELECTRIC SHOCK

Use these tips to avoid being electrocuted:

- Check electrical cords and cables for defects and proper grounding.
- Turn off and unplug tools and equipment before you clean, check, or do maintenance on the equipment.
- Keep power tools and equipment away from water.
- Never touch a fallen power line.
- Stay a safe distance from power lines when working in trees, on metal ladders, or when carrying metal ladders.

A SAFE & HEALTHY WORKPLACE

You have the right to:

- A safe and healthy workplace.
- Tell your employer about unsafe or unhealthy work conditions.
- Report unsafe or unhealthy work conditions to OSHA and do so confidentially.

You may not be fired or punished for:

- Raising concerns about workplace safety or health;
- Contacting OSHA;
- Participating in an OSHA inspection; or
- Refusing to work if 1) you are in serious and immediate danger, 2) you ask your employer to fix it and he doesn't, 3) there is no time to call OSHA, and 4) there is no other way to do the job safely.

In order to get help you must report to OSHA within 30 days of the firing or other punishment.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

You have a right to work without being treated differently because of your race, skin color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or age (age 40 or older). Your employer cannot fire or punish you for reporting these concerns.

HOW TO FIND HELP

This guide is provided as a public service. For more information or to file a complaint, contact the federal agencies listed below. Their services are free.

CONCERN	AGENCY CONTACT
Safety & health information, inspections, investigations, & complaints	OSHA Occupational Safety & Health Administration 800-321-OSHA TTY: 877-889-5627 www.osha.gov
Pesticides, pest control, heat stress	EPA Environmental Protection Agency 800-858-PEST TTY: 202-272-0165 www.epa.gov/pesticides
Wages, hours of work, types of jobs you can do	ESA Employment Standards Administration, Wage & Hour Division 866-4US-WAGE TTY: 877-889-5627 www.youthrules.dol.gov
Discrimination & harassment	EEOC Equal Employment Opportunity Commission 800-669-4000 TTY: 800-669-6820 www.youth.eeoc.gov
Safety & health information, statistics & research	NIOSH National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health 800-35-NIOSH www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/youth
Lead-based paint, mold, allergy, asthma, or other unsafe or unhealthful conditions in homes	HUD Housing & Urban Development 202-755-1785 www.hud.gov/offices/lead

Can You Dig It?

A Safety & Health Guide for Young Workers in Landscaping, Greenhouses, & Nurseries

For more safety and health information for young workers, please visit us at www.youngworkers.net.

