

**In this issue of the Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) Listserv,
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1. Grinder Recalled for Laceration Hazard

Metabo Corporation of West Chester, PA, has recalled units of a rat tail angle grinder because the tool's on-off switch can lock in the on position, thus posing a laceration hazard to users. The Consumer Products Safety Commission, charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death associated with various products, reports that the recall announced December 5, 2017, applies to 5-inch, 6-inch, and 7-inch rat tail angle grinders with a brake. Recalled models include WEPBA 17-125 Quick RT DS, WEPBA 17-150 Quick RT DS, and WEPB 19-180 RT DS. Serial numbers are from 70300xxxxxx to 70700xxxxx. Model numbers and serial numbers are located on a label on the bottom of the tool behind the red brake.

Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled angle grinders and contact Metabo for instructions on how to receive a free repair or replacement angle grinder. Contact Metabo toll-free at 844-470-5540, by email to info@metabousa.com, or visit www.metabo.com and click on Service for more information.



Resources

- Consumer Products Safety Commission
<https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls/2018/Metabo-Recalls-Rat-Tail-Angle-Grinders-Due-to-Laceration-Hazard>
- Metabo Services <https://www.metabo.com/us/enus/info/service/services/>

2. Safe Snow Shoveling & Snow Blowing

Snow shoveling and use of a snow blower present a number of hazards. Here are some tips to help keep you safe while shoveling snow.

Preparation:

- **Dress appropriately.** Wear water-repellent clothing, layered to allow removal of a layer to prevent overheating. Cover your head, hands, and feet with weather-appropriate gear. Wear shoes/boots with slip-resistant soles.
- **Timing matters.** Start snow removal when there is a light covering and repeat. Do not wait for the snow to stop/accumulate. Do not plan to shovel immediately after eating and avoid caffeine before beginning.
- **Clear vision is important.** Be sure your cold weather clothing does not obstruct your vision so you can watch for icy spots/uneven surfaces. Maintain awareness of your surroundings so you do not inadvertently find yourself in a traffic path as vehicles may not have good traction on the snow/ice.
- **Prepare yourself.** Shoveling snow can raise your heart rate and blood pressure. Warm up before shoveling, stretching as you would for any workout. Walking a few minutes or marching in place is one suggestion for a ‘warm-up.’ Cold, tight muscles are more likely to result in a sprain or strain. If you have a history of heart or other medical problems or do not exercise regularly, check with your doctor before shoveling.

While shoveling:

- **Pace yourself.** Snow shoveling is an aerobic activity. Take frequent breaks and drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. STOP shoveling immediately if you experience pain or difficulty breathing or become fatigued.
- **Use proper equipment.** Use a shovel comfortable for your height and strength. Sometimes a smaller blade is better as it avoids the risk of trying to pick up too much snow at once.
- **Use proper technique.** When gripping the shovel position your hands 12 inches apart. This increases leverage and reduces the strain on your body. If possible, push the snow rather than lift to avoid back strain.

- **Push the snow, if possible. Lift only when necessary. If you must lift, lift properly.**
 - Lift with your legs and tighten your stomach muscles.
 - Keep your back straight and do not bend at the waist.
 - Scoop small amounts and walk to where you want to dump the snow.
 - Never remove deep snow all at once, rather shovel an inch or two and repeat.
 - Do not twist your body to shovel or empty the load. Never throw snow over your shoulder.

These are just a few tips to help prevent injury related to snow removal. If possible, use a snow blower instead of shoveling by hand. However, recognize that a snow blower presents unique hazards.

- **Never wear loose pants, jackets, or scarves.** Loose clothing can become entangled in moving parts and pull you in with them.
- **Operate snow blowers only when there is good visibility.**
- **NEVER stick your hands in the snow blower!** To resolve jams, shut-off the engine and wait more than five seconds. Use a solid object to clear the chute.
- **Do not leave the snow blower unattended.** Shut off the engine if you must walk away.
- **Add fuel before starting the machine, never while the engine is running or hot.** Be sure to fuel the snow blower outside not in a garage, shed or another enclosed area. Do not operate in an enclosed area to avoid being overcome by engine fumes (carbon monoxide).
- **Avoid the engine.** The engine becomes hot during use and can burn unprotected flesh.
- **Use the pull-cord safely.** Hold cord firmly, stand with feet wide apart. Do not force cord if it does not move freely. Sharply pulling can cause upper body/back injury.
- **Watch the power cord.** For electric snow blowers, remain aware of power cord location. Entangled/severed power cords can lead to shock or electrocution.
- **Do not remove safety devices and keep hands and feet away from moving parts.** Safety devices, shields, guards, and interlocks are there for operator protection.
- **Watch out for motor recoil.** After the machine is turned off there is a brief recoil of motor and blades.
- **Keep others away, including children.** Snow blowers can pick up and shoot objects such as rocks and other debris with significant force. Take care to properly position the discharge chute.
- **Wear earplugs.** Gas-powered models typically run about 85 decibels so protect your hearing.

- **Understand the machine.** Read the instruction manual prior to use and be familiar with all features. Do not attempt to repair or maintain the snow blower without reading the instruction manual.

Resources

- **National Safety Council** “*Snow Shoveling*”
http://www.nsc.org/NSCDocuments_Corporate/SafetyObservancesDocuments/Snow-Shoveling.pdf
- **Snow and Ice Management Association** “*Safe Snow Shoveling*”
<http://www.sima.org/discover-sima/public-safety/safety-tips/safe-snow-shoveling>
- **American Association of Orthopedic Surgeons** “*Orthoinfo: Prevent Snow Shoveling and Snowblowing Injuries*”
<http://orthoinfo.aaos.org/topic.cfm?topic=A00060>
- **Consumer Reports** “*Commensense tips for safer snow blowing*”
<http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/news/2013/12/common-sense-tips-for-safer-snow-blowing/index.htm>
- **Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety** “*Landscaping – Snow Blower*”
https://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/safety_haz/landscaping/snow_throwers.html

3. Safety Shorts – Snow Blower & Snow Shoveling Safety

This series features links to short safety resource(s) each month. Provided this month are resources related to snow shoveling safety.

- **Snow Shoveling Safety** (Cleveland Clinic, 2:06 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-IMXSElabMM>
- **Easy Snow Shoveling Techniques – LSTraining.com** (LS Training System, 2:26 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hX6uaTivlcQ>
- **Snowblower Safety** (Grabow Hand to Shoulder Center, 2.47 minutes) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G00z3F_lmeY
- **Snow Blower Safety** (Cleveland Clinic, 1.33 minutes)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DbgHyC3Z85s>

NOTE: Resources are provided for informational purposes only. Publication does not in any way endorse a particular company or product or affect current UNL policies and procedures.

4. Near Miss: 20-Liter Metal Container Leak

Researchers were using a metal 20-liter container to collect waste solvents that included acetone and methylene chloride. At one point, research staff noted deformation in the flooring and upon moving the container realized it had a slow leak. Part of the floor had to be cut out to clean up the release.

There was no definitive cause of the leak. The contents of the can were not acidic or basic. Many salts, even salts of organic compounds, can be corrosive without extremes in pH. The container in question had been in the lab for some time. Apparently, some type of corrosion process occurred. For known or suspected corrosive materials, use glass or compatible plastic containers. Where possible, always use secondary containment.

When using metal containers to collect waste, minimize how long the container is used to accumulate the waste. Pay close attention to the container and the surrounding area for abnormalities. Dispose of the container via EHS after 30 days even if the container is not full.

Resources:

- **Hazardous/Radioactive Material Collection Procedures** Safe Operating Procedure (SOP) https://ehs.unl.edu/sop/s-chem_collection_procedures.pdf

5. Situational Preparedness – Safe Driving Help

Situational preparedness is so important that we will be looking at various aspects over time, as well as providing resources to assist you to “be prepared” for whatever situations you may encounter.

To assist UNL drivers to reduce the likelihood of crashing, Patrick Barrett, Director of Transportation Services, has provided UNL employees access to a defensive driving course to take online at their own pace and as the seasons and associated hazards change. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln's "Driver Safety & Improvement Training" course teaches enrollees the importance of continuous driving education, advise them of safety features of standard vehicles, and educates them on how to improve common driving tasks.

There are several modules of this training course that address driving in inclement weather including the following: Driving Tips for Wet Weather; Safely

Remove Snow from Your Car; How to Drive in the Snow. Take advantage of the availability of this course and these modules to refresh your knowledge of safe driving habits.

To access the ***Driver Safety and Improvement Training***, use one of the following browsers: Internet Explorer, Firefox or Safari and log in to My.UNL Academic Portal (<https://my.unl.edu>) using your UNL credentials. Select the following options: “Blackboard” and “N.” Your USERNAME is the first part of your email address before the “@” symbol. Your PASSWORD is the same one you use for your email.

Once logged into the My.UNL Academic Portal, select “Courses & Organizations” from the tab along the top row of selections. This will bring up a screen with “My Organizations” on the right. Enter the word “driver” in the Organization Search box and click “Go.”

If you have trouble accessing the portal you can receive assistance through the UNL Help Desk (23970), Option #3 (help with Blackboard) or email mysupport@unl.edu.

Resources

- My.UNL Academic Portal <https://my.unl.edu/>

6. Near Misses Matter!

A campus-wide initiative, led by the Chancellor’s University Safety Committee (CUSC) is underway to encourage all UNL employees to report unsafe practices and Near Misses. A near miss is an incident where no property was damaged and no personal injury sustained, but where, given a slight shift in time or position, damage and/or injury or illness easily could have occurred. This type of situation is often thought of as a “close call.” The purpose of such reporting is to identify and abate contributing factors before they result in personal injury/illness or property damage.

By reporting these circumstances, you are contributing to a safer and healthier campus environment. Information reported is shared throughout the University for educational/awareness purposes. Specific identifying information (e.g., names, departments, etc.) is removed before reporting on an incident. We appreciate your participation and assure you that there is no risk of repercussions for reporting a situation or hazard.

To support this effort, the EHS “*Near Miss/Close Call Incident Reporting Form*,” revised to include unsafe practices, is online through the EHS website. EHS also has available business-card size handouts containing the URL to report. NOTE: The URL has changed recently so if you have these small handouts

contact us for replacement. Please consider requesting a number of these Near Miss/Close Call reporting informational cards to share with those in your area. To request any quantity of these business-card size handouts contact EHS at 402-472-4925 or ehs@unl.edu.

Resources

- *Near Miss/Close Call Incident Reporting Form* <https://ehs.unl.edu/near-missclose-call-incident-reporting-form>

Remember...SAFETY IS AN ATTITUDE!

Environmental Health and Safety

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
3630 East Campus Loop
Lincoln, NE 68583-0824
(402) 472-4925
<http://ehs.unl.edu>