Maintenance, Groundskeeping and Custodial Safety

Slip and Fall Prevention (also see section on Slips, Trips and Falls)

- Proper footwear is required. All footwear should:
  - Fit snugly, be comfortable and have slip-resistant soles with good tread.
  - Be clean and in good condition at all times.
  - Be inspected regularly for damage, and repaired or replaced when worn or defective.
- Utilize wet floor signs when mopping floors or cleaning up liquid spills.
  - All walkways and aisles must be kept free of debris or other trip and fall hazards.
  - Employees must be observant and always looking for slip, trip and fall hazards. If a hazard is noticed (for example, a liquid spill), it must be immediately cleaned up or removed.

Safe Ladder and Stepladder Use

- Read and follow the manufacturer’s instruction label affixed to the ladder before use.
- Do not use ladders that have loose rungs, cracked or split side rails, missing rubber foot pads or are otherwise visibly damaged.
- Keep ladder rungs clean, free of grease and be sure to remove buildup of material such as dirt or mud.
- When performing work from a ladder, face the ladder and do not lean backward or sideways.
- Allow only one person on the ladder at a time.
- Do not stand on the top two rungs of a ladder.
- Do not stand on a ladder that wobbles, or that leans to the left or right.
- Do not try to “walk” a ladder by rocking it. Climb down and move it.
- Do not use a metal ladder on roof tops or within 50 feet of electrical power lines.
- Do not use a ladder as a horizontal platform.
Chemical Use and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Ensure you read and understand all chemical labels and material safety data sheets.
- Utilize chemicals only as outlined on the label or included instructions.
- Wear eye protection, gloves and other required PPE when utilizing cleaning or other chemicals.
- Ask your supervisor if you have any questions.

Gasoline-Powered Lawn Maintenance Tools

- Wear hearing and eye protection when operating a gasoline-powered tool.
- Do not operate equipment you haven’t been trained to use.
- Do not use tools with parts that are loose, worn, cracked or otherwise visibly damaged.
- Do not alter or bypass any safety device provided by the manufacturer.
- Do not pour fuel into the tank of a running engine.
- Do not smoke while servicing, using or refueling a gasoline-powered tool.
- Keep body parts and clothing away from the running engine and cutting blade.
- Do not run a gasoline engine inside an enclosed space, like a storage shed.
- Turn off the engine when you’re not cutting or trimming.
- Stop the engine and disconnect the spark plug wire before cleaning, inspecting, adjusting or repairing cutting blades or other rotating parts.

Brush Hog/Tractor

- Visually inspect the area to be mowed.
- Remove or mow around hazards, such as tree stumps, roots, holes, ditches, rocks, branches, sprinklers, light fixtures and pipes.
- Only the operator is permitted to ride on a riding mower — no passengers!
- Never try to get on or off a moving tractor.
- Start the engine only from the operator’s seat, with the transmission in neutral or park.
- Slow down before sharp turns.
- Do not drive near the edge of a gully or steep embankment.
- Back out of a ditch or up a steep slope.
- When using a riding mower, mow up and down the slope. Do not mow across a slope.
- Keep the mower in gear when going down slopes.
- Before dismounting the tractor, lock the brakes, lower implements to the ground and turn off the engine.

Line Trimmer/Weed Eater/Brushcutters

- Always wear eye and hearing protection while operating a line trimmer.
- Do not start the line trimmer if anyone is within 30 feet.
- Place the line trimmer on firm ground in an open area before starting.
- Before refueling, remove the trimmer from your harness, place the trimmer on the ground and allow the engine to cool.
- Stop the trimmer before setting it down.
• Do not wrap the starter rope around your hand.
• Do not allow the starter rope grip to snap back; guide it as it reverts.
• Hold the trimmer with two hands and wear a harness if available.
• Do not cut above waist level; use the tool at ground level.

Aerial Lifts

Before you operate an aerial lift you must receive training and an operator’s permit.

• Read all safety and operation stickers on the machine.
• Read the operator/owner manual.
• Visually check around the machine for obstructions, uneven terrain and debris.
• Examine the travel path of the lift for holes, soft ground or other hazards.
• Check for proper tire inflation and tightness of bolts on chassis.
• Check upper and lower controls for proper operation.
• Make sure all platform railing bolts are in place and secured.
• Check the hydraulic oil and engine oil levels daily.
• Make sure the machine is on a firm, level surface.
• Check to make sure that clearance is adequate to prevent danger from energized power lines.
• Wear a hard hat where head contact with overhead objects or structures is possible.
• Distribute the load evenly on the floor of the lift platform.
• Keep tools and parts in a secured container to prevent falling while operating the lift.

When using an aerial lift:

• Never allow unauthorized or untrained personnel to use the lift.
• Never operate electric lifts while the batteries are being charged.
• Never operate the machine until platform gates or chains are secured.
• Never overload the lift by exceeding its rated capacity.
• Never use the lift on soft or uneven surfaces.
• Never store loose tools or supplies on the platform.
• Never sit, climb or lean on the platform railings.
• Never use planks, ladders, scaffolds or any item to extend the reach of a lift.
• Never bypass or override any hydraulic, mechanical or electrical safety device.
• Never operate the lift when wind exceeds 25 mph (or less, if specified by the lift manufacturer).
• Never operate within 10 feet of energized power lines (up to 50kV).

Hand Tools

• Store tools in secured containers to prevent them from falling off of elevated work platforms.
• Keep the blade of all cutting tools sharp.
• Carry all sharp tools in a sheath or holster.
• Tag worn, damaged or defective tools “Out of Service” and do not use them.
• Do not use a tool if its handle has splinters, burrs, cracks or splits, or if the head of the tool is loose.
• Do not perform make-shift repairs to tools.
• Do not use impact tools, such as hammers, chisels or steel stakes that have mushroomed heads.
• Do not carry sharp or pointed hand tools, such as screwdrivers, scribes, scrapers or chisels in your pocket unless the tool or pocket is sheathed.
• Do not carry tools in your hand when climbing — carry them in tool belts or hoist them to the work area with a hand line.
• Do not throw tools from one location to another, from one employee to another or from scaffolds or other elevated platforms.
• Transport hand tools only in toolboxes or tool belts. Do not carry tools in your clothing.
Snow Removal

The intent of any snow removal plan is to standardize and document the routine actions normally taken to reduce employee and visitor slip, trip or fall exposure during a winter snow or ice storm. Every storm is different and requires a slightly different approach to controlling and removing snow and ice accumulations. One thing is consistent for any circumstance: on the day of a snow or ice storm, the control and removal of that storm’s accumulation must be the top priority for the snow removal crew.

A sound plan identifies the general staff resources, equipment, areas of responsibility and general strategies for addressing any given storm. It should routinely be reviewed to improve the effectiveness of snow and ice control efforts.

The goal of a snow and ice control program is to maintain adequate traction for pedestrians and vehicles in winter conditions. This does not mean bare, dry pavement should be expected after each snowfall. Snow and ice storm control and removal efforts are focused towards making a campus accessible by 7 a.m., which means “one pass” by motorized snow and ice removal equipment or hand shoveling in the following areas:

- Service drives
- Walks
- Parking lots
- Steps, ramps and curbs

UH’s WalkSafe Campaign

Weather conditions are often a significant factor in slip and fall injuries. At United Heartland, we work with our customers proactively to help them avoid such incidents and improve workplace safety. With that in mind, WalkSafe — our slip and fall prevention campaign — offers valuable information and tips on winter weather-related safety covering a wide range of topics, including winter weather preparation, safe vehicle operation, salting and surface treatments, the importance of wearing proper footwear and more.

For more information, visit http://unitedheartland.com/united-heartland-toolbox/loss-control/walksafe
Service Hours
A snow removal crew should be comprised of maintenance, groundskeeping and contract services companies who are on-call during the snow removal season. With these staff resources, the focus should be to concentrate control and removal efforts between 3 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays during the academic term. Minimal services are provided after 5 p.m. depending upon storm conditions, duration and hours already worked by the equipment operators.

Service may also be adjusted for weekend, holiday and break periods as staff and other resources are available. During a storm while precipitation is falling, motorized snow removal efforts should be geared toward providing accessible paths to, from and between parking lots and buildings. Clearing of building entrances, stairs and ramps will be ongoing as long as custodians for the particular building are present.

The full maximum motorized cleanup effort, however, will generally not begin until the storm’s precipitation is complete. For snow storms, the use of rock salt will generally be used for most parking lots and sidewalks, while calcium chloride pellets will be used at entryways of buildings. A sand/salt mix is only used on rare occasions when there are extremely low temperatures or ice storms present.

Motorized Equipment
During snow storms, the snow-removal crew will be called in at 3 a.m. to insure the “one pass” on walks, roads and drives can be accomplished. The equipment used during storms will be dependent upon the snow accumulation and will generally be as follows:

- Accumulations less than 1 inch — motorized brooms used for walkways and a salting truck will be deployed.
- Accumulations greater than 1 inch — plow trucks, tractors and loaders driven by the grounds staff will be deployed.

After snow storms, the primary cleanup effort will begin. The equipment used after each storm will be dependent upon the snow accumulation and will generally be as follows:

- Accumulations less than 1 inch — major cleanup will be the same as is used during storms, as listed above.
- Accumulation greater than 1 inch — the entire grounds crew plus auxiliary drivers will be called in at 3 a.m.

During ice storms, the grounds crew will be called in at 4 a.m., and salting will begin. All motorized equipment should have assigned routes — a route map should be kept in each vehicle. A master route map should be made available in the maintenance and groundskeeping office as well.

Hand Shoveling
- Building custodians are expected to shovel, clear, sweep and/or salt all academic and administration building entrances, stairs and handicapped ramps out to the motorized equipment route point.
- The custodial supervisors are responsible for coordinating this process in their respective buildings.
- After the primary storm cleanup is over, facility services staff will continue to monitor and maintain the exterior stairs, curbs, etc.

Secondary Cleanup
- Snow and ice removal efforts will generally continue throughout the workday (6 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) Monday through Friday.
- Routes should be regularly inspected to ensure satisfactory completion of snow and ice removal.
- On days following the storm, the pushing back of snow piles and widening of sidewalks to create additional snow storage will be performed.

Equipment Cleanup and Storage
- Salt spreaders should be emptied by their operators prior to being put away, regardless of the next anticipated use.
- Diesel-powered equipment should be stored in a heated facility.
- All equipment must be washed after the completion of all snow removal activities. The only exception would be the anticipated use of the equipment within the next 24 to 48 hours.
- Equipment cleanup should be assigned to grounds crew members based on workload.