



## Snow Removal Safety

### Tips for Shoveling Snow

Shoveling snow can be a strenuous activity, particularly because cold weather can be taxing on the body. There is a potential for exhaustion, dehydration, back injuries, or heart attacks. Use these tips to stay safe while shoveling.

#### Getting Ready

Start with the proper shovel. Using a plastic shovel instead of steel-tipped is a great move when your driveway or walkway is uneven. That way, your shovel isn't catching as much. You can decrease the amount of snow sticking on your shovel by spraying it down with cooking spray before you begin.

- Avoid caffeine and nicotine. They increase your heart rate and may cause blood vessels to constrict. Stay hydrated with water while shoveling.
- Warm up first with some stretching exercises or march in place or walk for a few minutes. With muscles warmed up, you'll work more efficiently and reduce the risk of injury.
- Wear good boots and breathable layers to keep your muscles warm and flexible.

#### Shoveling

- Scoop small amounts of snow at a time and where possible, **push** the snow instead of lifting it. The use of proper lifting technique is necessary to avoid back and other injuries when shoveling snow: keep the back straight, lift with the legs and do not turn or twist the body.
- Bend your knees to lift while shoveling. Let your leg muscles and arms do the work, not your back.
- Avoid sudden twisting and turning motions.
- Push the snow straight ahead and walk it to the snowbank. Don't throw it.
- Keep up with the storm, shovel in smaller amounts instead of waiting until the storm is over.
- Avoid walking or driving on the snow before you shovel it. Patting it down, makes it more difficult to get rid of.
- Shovel your deck by hand by pushing the snow to the stairs.
- Remove snow from stairs by facing the stair from one step down.
- Push, don't shovel snow off a roof.
- Take frequent breaks to avoid exhaustion and alleviate the strain off your muscles.

#### Keep Fire Hydrants Cleared



## Using Snow Blowers

Using a snow blower is a great way to rid your driveway or the path to your doorstep of powdery snow. It's important to use caution at all times.

- Make sure your snow blower is in good working condition long before you need it.
- Read your operator's manual.
- Never clear the exhaust chute while the snow blower is running.
- Never attempt to clear a jam by hand. First, turn the snow blower off and wait for all moving parts to stop, and then use a long stick to clear wet snow or debris from the machine. Keep your hands and feet away from moving parts.
- Refuel a snow blower prior to starting the machine; do not add fuel when the equipment is running or when the engine is hot.
- Don't wear loose jackets, baggy pants or flowing scarves while snow blowing. They could get tangled up in the machine.
- Wear hearing protection because snow blowers often run at 85 decibels (or more) and damage can occur.
- Remove anything from your lawn or driveway that can get caught in the machine. That includes newspapers, doormats and loose wires.
- Watch for pets and pedestrians.