

Protecting Your Assets

Get Ready: 10 Tips To Help Home And Business Owners Prepare Ahead Of Storms, Hurricanes And Floods

(NAPS)—The preparations you make now, ahead of storms, floods or hurricanes, can help you recover faster and stay safe during cleanup. The Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), an international trade association representing manufacturers and suppliers of power equipment, small engines and battery power, utility and personal transport vehicles, and golf cars, reminds home and business owners to get ready before a storm strikes and make preparations now.

“Weather can be unpredictable, so it’s important to always keep your equipment in working order, to have the right fuel on hand and to know where your safety gear is. This is doubly true during storm season, as the weather can change quickly,” said Kris Kiser, president and CEO of OPEI. “You also want to know how to use your equipment safely and use caution when cleaning up.”

These tips can help homeowners and businesses plan ahead for storm cleanup:

- **Take stock of your outdoor power equipment.** Make sure it’s in good working order. If needed, take the equipment to an authorized service center for maintenance or repair. If you need to buy a new piece of equipment, get it before the storm and learn how to use it.

- **Find your safety gear.** Avoid the scramble for sturdy shoes, safety goggles, hard hats, reflective clothing and work gloves, which should be stored in an accessible area with your equipment.

- **Review the owner’s manuals.** Read product manuals to ensure you know how to operate your equipment safely.

- **Have the right fuel on hand.** Fuel stations may be closed after a storm. Store your fuel in an approved container. Use the type of fuel recommended by the equipment manufacturer. It’s illegal to use any fuel with more than 10% ethanol in outdoor power equipment (for more information on proper fueling visit www.LookBeforeYouPump.com).

- **Charge batteries.** Collect the batteries for your outdoor power equipment and fully charge them ahead of the storm.



Get your outdoor equipment ready now to be safe and prepared when bad weather hits.

- **Use safety precautions.** Be aware of fundamental dangers that can occur. For instance, chainsaw kickback may happen when the moving chain at the tip of the guide bar touches an object or when the wood closes in and pinches the saw chain in the cut. Always stand with your weight on both feet, and adjust your stance so you’re angled away from the blade. Hold the chainsaw with both hands. Never over-reach or cut anything above your shoulder height. Have a planned retreat path if something falls.

- **Ensure portable generators have plenty of ventilation.** Generators should never be used in an enclosed area or inside a home or garage, even if the windows or doors are open. Place the generator outside and away from windows, doors and vents that could allow carbon monoxide inside. Keep the generator dry. Do not use it in rainy or wet conditions. Before refueling, turn the generator off and let it cool down.

- **Drive Utility Type Vehicles (UTVs) with caution.** Keep the vehicle stable and drive slowly. Do not turn the vehicle mid-slope or while on a hill.

- **Be aware of others.** Keep bystanders, children and animals out of your work area. Don’t let other people near outdoor power equipment when starting or using it.

- **Pay attention to your health.** Storm cleanup can be taxing on the body and the spirit. Don’t operate power equipment when you’re fatigued. Drink plenty of water and take regular breaks.

Keep this advice in mind and you may be better prepared to weather any storm.