

This risk assessment relates only to the *generic* features of a common activity; it does not cover those *specific* to a location or group. It therefore must not be used without completing the local review, making additions as necessary to take account of local circumstances. However, such a local review need not be timeconsuming. Use the box at the bottom to create the local review, or add extra pages as necessary. **SEE ACCOMPANYING SAFETY NOTES**

ACTIVITY ASSESSED	ASSESSOR	ASSESSMENT DATE
9. USE OF STRIMMERS	STEPHEN BOLSOVER	11 th May 2016
HAZARD	RISK LEVEL	PRECAUTIONS
potential for harm		to remove hazard or reduce risk level. One precaution may tackle several hazards.
Operator: Contact with moving parts	H	Only competent persons familiar with their operation to use these machines. Switch off machine before changing, altering or repairing. Stand firmly on both feet when operating to avoid falling over.
Operator: Flying debris	M	Always cut from right to left and away from feet. Always wear long trousers to protect the legs and goggles or a face mask to protect the eyes. Wear a hard hat as necessary.
Exhaust fumes	L	Never run the machine indoors. Ensure equipment is in good condition.
Fire	L	Ensure the exhaust muffler is in good condition. Do not smoke or use naked flame near equipment. Use a quick release harness. Do not work near to a bonfire.
Skin conditions, cuts, scrapes	L	Use gloves when mixing/filling with petrol/oil and when cleaning the machine.
Fatigue and vibration	H	Do not use the machine for extended periods, take regular breaks. Adjust harness and handles for comfortable use before beginning work. Wear clothing that protects from the element and allows easy movement but will not obstruct or get entangled.
Noise	L	Ear defenders must be worn at all times. To protect others from noise, do not operate if there is anyone within a 10M radius of the machine.
Machine hazards: handles, kickback, compression, electric shock, vibration etc.	M	Ensure equipment is in good condition, check nuts/bolts/screws before use. Strim right to left. Clear ground of debris before beginning work. Grip starter cord firmly. Do not touch starter plug/power cable. Wear gloves at all times.
Skin irritation or dermatitis from plant sap	L	Some plant materials, eg. Giant Hogweed, become hazardous only in association with the UV of sunlight, causing phytophotodermatitis; but others like Euphorbia can be nasty just on their own. Therefore, skin/eye contact with sap and other plant materials is to be avoided by wearing suitable clothing, gloves and goggles. If contact does occur, wash off skin and/or irrigate eyes with clean water thoroughly: at the site if water is available, otherwise emphasize to the worker that this should be done as soon as possible on return home.
RISKS AND PRECAUTIONS SPECIFIC TO THE SITE OR DAY		
ASSESSOR		
ASSESSMENT DATE		
APPLICABLE DATES (This is likely either to be one specific day, or “until further notice”).)		

Risk level: L = Low, M = Medium, H = High

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RESTRICTIONS A strimmer is a hand held motor driven device that cuts grass and herbs with a rotating string or hinged plastic blade no larger than a lolly stick. Machines that use a rotating metal blade, or a substantial plastic blade, are brush cutters and are not covered by this risk assessment – see the next one. Do not repair or alter machine, including replacing the cutting string, with the engine running and never run it indoors or near naked flames/someone smoking. Do not operate a petrol driven machine with a faulty/ damaged muffler. Do not work in unsuitable inclement conditions: cold, wet and windy weather, particularly on exposed sites is unpleasant and dangerous so that volunteers will be less careful and have less concentration thus increasing risk of accident under these conditions. The body is more at risk when cold. Very hot, sunny: be aware of sun burn, sunstroke (especially on windy days) and heat exhaustion.		
PREVENTATIVE MEASURES First aid kits must always be on site and in a location near to and known to everyone. The machine must be used according to the manufacturer's operating instructions. Loose clothing, eg. flapping sleeves should be avoided. Wear overalls if possible. Use any harness the machine has with it.		
PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT Long trousers, ear defenders and goggles or a face mask are required. Use gloves when operating, filling or cleaning the machine.		
TRAINING These machines must only be used by people familiar with their safe use, either through reading the manual or after appropriate training has been given either by the hire company or by a qualified person with a comprehensive knowledge of how they work and how to work safely with them. Do not carry out repairs unless you have been properly trained to do so.		
MONITORING Avoid contact with plant sap/materials and wash off thoroughly if this occurs. Ensure operators take regular breaks.		
INFORMATION Manufacturer's operating instructions.		

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