Blade Sharpening – Landscaping Stats and Facts

FACTS

Primary hazards and types of injuries associated with blade sharpening in landscaping in the USA and Canada:

CUTS AND LACERATIONS

Contact with Sharp Blades: Handling sharp blades can easily lead to cuts and lacerations. These injuries occur when hands or fingers come into contact with the blade’s sharp edge during the sharpening process.

Improper Handling: Using hands instead of tools to manipulate the blade or failure to secure the blade properly can result in severe cuts.

EYE INJURIES

Flying Debris and Sparks: Blade sharpening often produces metal shavings and sparks, which can cause eye injuries if proper eye protection is not worn.

BURNS

Hot Surfaces and Sparks: The friction generated during sharpening can heat the blade and surrounding equipment, leading to burns if touched. Sparks from sharpening can also cause burns to exposed skin.

REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURIES

Prolonged Use: Repetitive motion and prolonged use of sharpening tools can cause strain injuries.

NOISE-INDUCED HEARING LOSS

High Noise Levels: The use of electric grinders and other sharpening equipment can produce high noise levels, potentially causing hearing loss over time if hearing protection is not used.

RESPIRATORY ISSUES

Inhalation of Dust and Fumes: Sharpening blades can produce metal dust and fumes that are harmful.

STATS

- Cuts, lacerations, and eye injuries are among the most common injuries related to blade sharpening. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, there are thousands of reported injuries each year involving garden tools, many of which are related to improper handling and sharpening of blades.
- An analysis of workers’ compensation claims in the landscaping sector revealed that serious injuries increased from 16% to 21% of total injuries. The most frequent serious injuries were sprains and fractures, often resulting from incidents involving equipment like lawnmower blades.
- The landscaping industry has a higher incidence of injuries compared to other sectors, with common injuries resulting from equipment use, including sharp blades.
- Many injuries in landscaping are caused by improper handling of tools, such as lacerations from sharp edges during maintenance tasks like sharpening.