

# MILLMERRAN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

24 CHARLOTTE STREET  
MILLMERRAN Q 4357

Tel. No. 0402 576 453  
millmerran\_historical@hotmail.com  
www.millmerranmuseum.com.au

## VOLUNTEER ROLE DESCRIPTION

### GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SAFETY GUIDELINES

Here are comprehensive safety guidelines for handling the Ride-on Mower, Push Mower, Whipper Snipper, and other grounds maintenance tools for a Volunteer Grounds Person at the Millmerran Museum. These guidelines focus on safe operation, protective equipment, and best practices to maintain a safe working environment.

---

## 1. General Safety Precautions for Grounds Maintenance

- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):** Always wear appropriate PPE for each task. This may include safety goggles, hearing protection, gloves, long pants, closed-toe shoes, and sun protection (hat, sunscreen).
- **Inspecting Equipment:** Before each use, inspect the equipment for any visible damage or wear. Check fuel and oil levels, ensure blades and trimmer lines are intact, and that all parts are securely in place. Report any issues to the supervisor.
- **Safe Environment:** Clear the work area of rocks, sticks, and other debris before operating machinery. Be mindful of surroundings, including other people, pets, and any buildings or vehicles that could be damaged by flying debris.

---

## 2. Ride-on Mower Guidelines

- **Pre-Operation Check:** Inspect the mower for leaks, ensure that tires are properly inflated, and confirm that the blade and deck are secure. Make sure the mower is fuelled outdoors, and check for any loose parts.
- **Starting and Operating:**
  - Mount the mower and adjust the seat so that you can comfortably reach the controls.
  - Keep both hands on the steering wheel while operating, and both feet inside the mower at all times.
  - Drive the mower slowly, especially on slopes or uneven ground. Avoid sharp turns and sudden movements, which can cause tipping.
  - Only operate on dry grass and never mow when it's wet or muddy to reduce the risk of slipping.

- Avoid mowing on steep slopes. For gentle slopes, mow up and down rather than across to prevent the mower from tipping.
  - **Post-Operation:**
    - Turn off the mower, set the brake, and remove the key before dismounting.
    - Let the engine cool down before re-fuelling or performing maintenance.
    - Clean the underside of the deck to remove grass clippings and debris.
- 

### 3. Push Mower Guidelines

- **Preparation:**
    - Before starting, check that the blade is sharp, the grass bag is empty, and all controls are functioning correctly.
    - Fill the fuel tank outdoors, away from any sources of ignition, and never refuel while the engine is hot.
  - **Safe Operation:**
    - Push the mower at a steady pace, and never pull it towards you. Maintain a good stance to avoid losing your balance.
    - Always mow across slopes (not up and down) to maintain control and reduce the risk of the mower rolling back.
    - Avoid mowing over gravel or any foreign objects that could cause injury or damage the mower.
  - **Maintenance:**
    - Turn off the mower and disconnect the spark plug before attempting to clean or adjust the blade.
    - Regularly check the oil level, air filter, and blade sharpness, and clean any grass clippings from the deck after use.
- 

### 4. Whipper Snipper (String Trimmer) Guidelines

- **Preparation:**
    - Use the correct size and type of line for the trimmer, and check that the guard is in place.
    - Wear safety goggles and hearing protection to protect from debris and noise.
  - **Safe Operation:**
    - Keep the trimmer close to the ground and maintain a firm grip on the handles.
    - Walk slowly and keep the trimmer head level to the ground, using a sweeping motion for an even cut.
    - Avoid hitting solid objects such as rocks, tree trunks, or fences, which can cause the line to break or recoil.
  - **Post-Use:**
    - Turn off the trimmer before inspecting or replacing the line.
    - Clean the air filter and the trimmer head after each use, and inspect for wear and tear.
-

## 5. Chemical Weed Spraying Guidelines

- **Preparation:**
    - Wear gloves, safety goggles, and a face mask when handling and applying chemicals.
    - Mix chemicals according to manufacturer instructions and never exceed recommended concentrations.
    - Only spray on calm days to avoid chemical drift, and do not spray near water sources.
  - **Application:**
    - Spray directly on weeds, avoiding desirable plants and flowers. Always point the nozzle downwards to minimize spread.
    - Keep the spray container upright, and avoid walking in areas you've sprayed until dry.
  - **Storage and Disposal:**
    - Store chemicals in a secure area, out of direct sunlight, and away from children and pets.
    - Dispose of empty containers and excess chemicals according to local regulations.
- 

## 6. Leaf Blower Guidelines

- **Preparation:**
    - Wear ear protection, as leaf blowers can be very loud. Safety goggles are also essential to protect from dust and debris.
    - Check the fuel level, if applicable, and ensure the blower's air intake is free from blockages.
  - **Safe Operation:**
    - Hold the blower firmly with both hands, and use a steady, sweeping motion across paths and areas to clear leaves and debris.
    - Avoid directing the blower at people or pets, and be mindful of dust or debris kicked up, especially on dry days.
  - **Maintenance:**
    - Clean the air filter regularly, and check for any loose parts or damaged sections after each use.
    - Store the blower in a dry place and follow the manufacturer's maintenance recommendations.
- 

## 7. Hedge Trimming and Branch Pruning Guidelines

- **Preparation:**
  - Inspect the hedge trimmer or secateurs for sharpness and secure connections. Wear gloves and safety goggles.
- **Safe Trimming:**

- Use both hands on the trimmer for control, and move it slowly in an upward or downward motion. Trim branches to avoid overstretching or standing on unstable surfaces.
- For small branches, use secateurs, cutting at a slight angle to promote healthy growth.
- **Post-Use:**
  - Clean the trimmer and secateurs, removing sap and residue. Store them in a safe location, away from moisture to prevent rusting.

These guidelines ensure that volunteers can safely and effectively maintain the museum grounds while minimizing the risk of injury or equipment damage. Volunteers should receive basic training on each piece of equipment to ensure they're comfortable with its operation.

---ooOoo---