

**12PB, 12SB  
14PB, 14SB, and 14SE  
21-Inch  
Walk-Behind  
Rotary Mowers**  
(Serial No. GXXXXXX010001- )

**John Deere Horicon Works  
OMM79671 Issue L9  
(This manual replaces OM-M79636.)**

LITHO IN U.S.A.  
ENGLISH

# Introduction

THANK YOU for purchasing a John Deere product.

READ THIS MANUAL carefully to learn how to operate and service your machine correctly. Failure to do so could result in personal injury or equipment damage.

THIS MANUAL SHOULD BE CONSIDERED a permanent part of your machine and should remain with the machine when you sell it.

MEASUREMENTS in this manual are U.S. customary units and their metric equivalents.

RIGHT-HAND AND LEFT-HAND sides are determined by facing in the direction of forward travel.

WRITE IDENTIFICATION NUMBERS in the Specifications section. Accurately record all the numbers to help in tracing the machine should it be stolen. Your dealer also needs these numbers when

you order parts. File the identification numbers in a secure place.

WARRANTY is provided as part of John Deere's support program for customers who operate and maintain their equipment as described in this manual. The warranty is explained on the warranty certificate which you should have received from your dealer.

This warranty provides you the assurance that John Deere will back its products where defects appear within the warranty period. In some circumstances, John Deere also provides field improvements, often without charge to the customer, even if the product is out of warranty. Should the equipment be abused, or modified to change its performance beyond the original factory specifications, the warranty will become void and field improvements may be denied. Setting fuel delivery above specifications or otherwise overpowering machines will result in such action.



Model 12PB, 2-Cycle Engine

M61526  
-JUN-01SEP88



Model 14SB, 4-Cycle Engine

M61525  
-JUN-01SEP88

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*All information, illustrations and specifications in this manual are based on the latest information available at the time of publication. The right is reserved to make changes at any time without notice.*

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# Safety

## RECOGNIZE SAFETY INFORMATION

This is the safety-alert symbol. When you see this symbol on your machine or in this manual, be alert to the potential for personal injury.

Follow recommended precautions and safe operating practices.



O53,ALERT -19-16JUN87

T81389 -UN-07DEC68

## UNDERSTAND SIGNAL WORDS

A signal word—DANGER, WARNING, or CAUTION—is used with the safety-alert symbol. DANGER identifies the most serious hazards.

Safety signs with signal word DANGER or WARNING are typically near specific hazards.

General precautions are listed on CAUTION safety signs. CAUTION also calls attention to safety messages in this manual.



O53,SIGNAL -19-07OCT85

-19-30SEP88

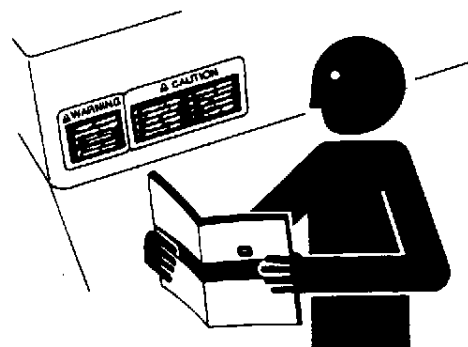
TS187

## FOLLOW SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

Carefully read all safety messages in this manual and on your machine safety signs. Keep safety signs in good condition. Replace missing or damaged safety signs.

Learn how to operate the machine and how to use controls properly. Do not let anyone operate without instruction.

Keep your machine in proper working condition. Unauthorized modifications to the machine may impair the function and/or safety and affect machine life.



O53,READ -19-23APR87

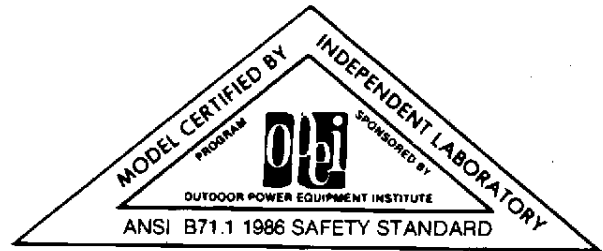
-UN-23AUG88

TS201



## OPEI CERTIFICATION

This OPEI Label on your mower indicates that this model has been certified by an independent laboratory for compliance with American National Standard B-71.1-1986, "Safety Specifications" for Power Lawn Mowers, Lawn and Garden Tractors, and Lawn Tractors.



O53.CERT1 -19-27APR88

TS288 -19-07OCT88

## INSPECT MOWER REGULARLY

Check hardware often. Keep it tight.

Clean engine often, especially cooling fins.

Discharge chute or rear bag must be in good condition, and in place.

Rear cover (on top of bag) must be working properly and in place.



MX,SABV,A -19-10AUG88

IM41506 -UN-06SEP88

## PROTECT FROM THROWN OBJECTS

Before you mow, clear mowing area of objects that might be thrown.

Discharge clippings away from people.

Discharge chute or grass bag must be in place.

Do not lift or block door open when blade is ENGAGED.



MX,SABV,C -19-25MAY89

IM41423 -UN-30AUG88

## PROTECT PEOPLE AND PETS

Keep people and pets out of mowing area.

Do not let children or untrained persons operate mower.

Do not leave mower unattended.



MX,SABV,B -19-10AUG88

IM61473 -UN-01SEP88



## OPERATE MOWER SAFELY

Do not run engine indoors unless there is good ventilation.

Be sure of footing. Walk—do not run.

Do not use mower for anything other than its original design.

Mow across face of slopes—not up and down.

Be especially careful when you change direction on slope.

Avoid sudden starts and stops.

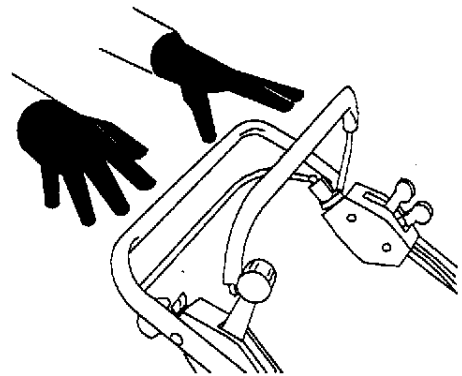
Do not leave mower on slope. Put mower on level surface.

MX,SABV,C1 -19-10AUG88

## EMERGENCY STOP

Release handle and levers:

- Mower will stop.
- Blade will stop.
- Engine will NOT stop.



MX,SABV,D -19-10AUG88

IM61445 -UN-01SEP88

## HANDLE FUEL SAFELY—AVOID FIRES

Handle fuel with care: it is highly flammable. Do not refuel the machine while smoking or when near open flame or sparks.

Always stop engine before refueling machine. Fill fuel tank outdoors.

Wait until engine is cool before you add fuel.

Prevent fires by keeping machine clean of accumulated trash, grease, and debris. Always clean up spilled fuel.

Do not store mower with fuel in tank in a building where fumes may reach an open flame or spark.



MX,SABV,D1 -19-02NOV89

TS202 -UN-23AUG88

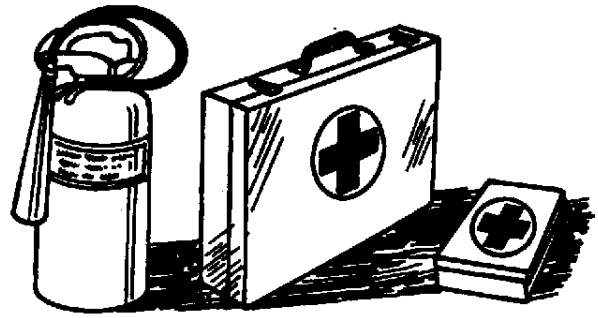


## PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES

Be prepared if a fire starts.

Keep a first aid kit and fire extinguisher handy.

Keep emergency numbers for doctors, ambulance service, hospital, and fire department near your telephone.



O53,FIRE2 -19-03MAR88

TS291 -UN-23AUG88

## WEAR RIGHT CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

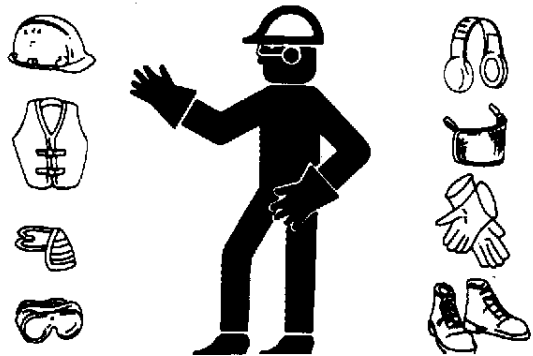
Wear close fitting clothing and safety equipment.

Wear safety glasses, goggles, or eye shield:

- When you operate mower.
- When you adjust or service mower.

Prolonged exposure to loud noise can cause impairment or loss of hearing.

Wear a suitable hearing protective device such as earmuffs or earplugs to protect against objectionable or uncomfortable loud noises.



MX,SABV,E -19-25MAY89

TS206 -UN-23AUG88

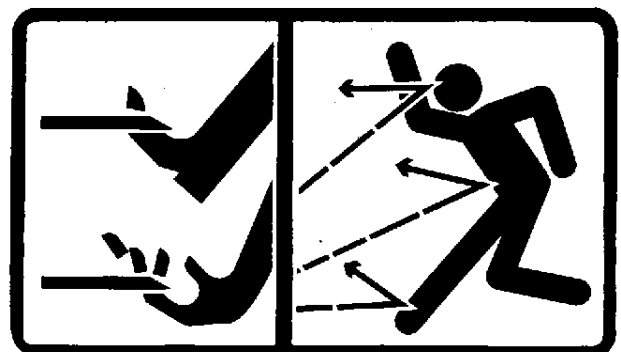
## AVOID INJURY FROM MOVING PARTS

Keep hands, feet, and clothing away from mower deck and discharge chute when blade is turning.

Do not make adjustments while engine is running, unless procedure is approved. If adjustments are to be made, STOP ENGINE.

Stop mower blade:

- Before you move between jobs.
- Before you cross gravel road, path, or sidewalk.
- When you are not mowing.



MX,SABV,F -19-10AUG88

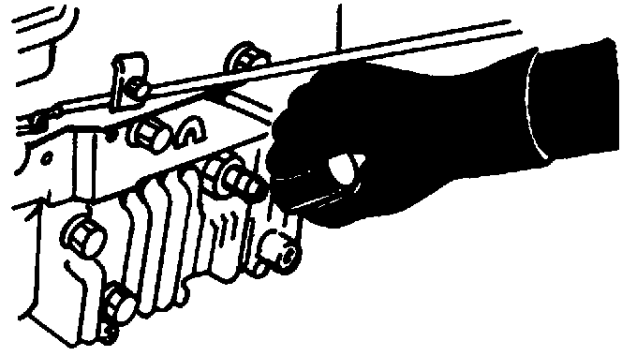
M41447 -UN-30AUG88



## SERVICE MOWER SAFELY

Before you service under deck:

- Put mower on level surface
- Stop engine. Let it cool.
- Disconnect spark plug wire.



MX,SABV,G -19-10AUG88

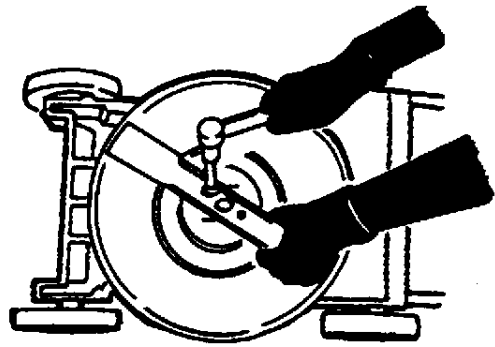
M41584 -UN-06SEP88

Wear gloves when you service blade.

Keep parts in good condition, fastened in place.

Replace worn or damaged parts immediately.

If you hit an object, stop mower. Fix damage before you operate.



MX,SABV,H -19-10AUG88

M61532 -UN-01SEP88



# READ SAFETY SIGNS

**CAUTION** HELP AVOID INJURIES

- Pick up objects that blade may hit and throw
- Keep children and bystanders far away
- Stop engine before adjusting cutting height
- Read operator's manual

**DANGER**

**ROTATING BLADE**

DO NOT PUT HANDS OR FEET UNDER OR INTO MOWER WHEN ENGINE IS RUNNING

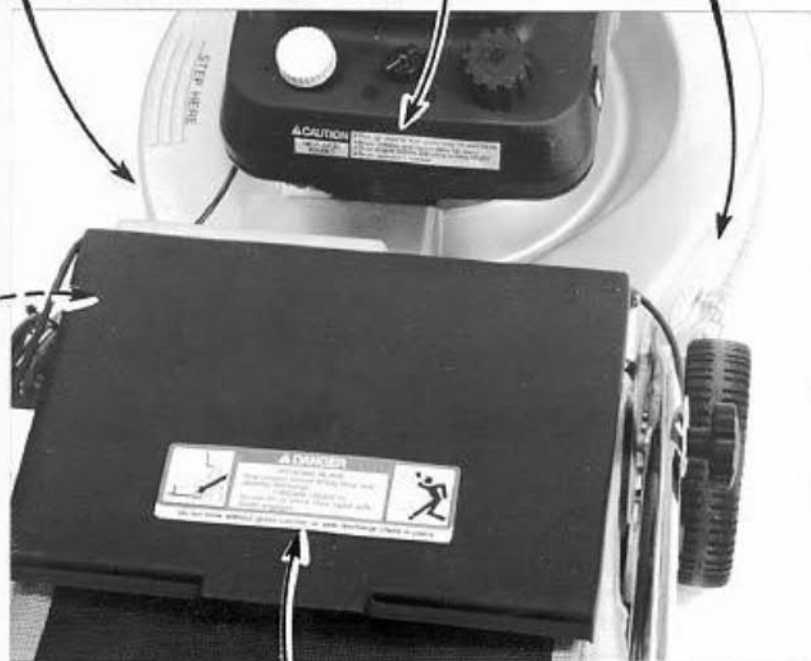
**DANGER**

KEEP HANDS and FEET AWAY

CUTTING BLADES

**CAUTION**

- BAG IS SUBJECT TO WEAR AND DETERIORATION
- CHECK BAG FREQUENTLY, REPLACE WHEN NECESSARY
- USE JOHN DEERE BAG OR EQUIVALENT TO COMPLY WITH SAFETY SPECIFICATIONS



**DANGER**

**ROTATING BLADE**

Stop engine before lifting door and clearing discharge

**THROWN OBJECTS**

Do not lift or block door open with blade engaged

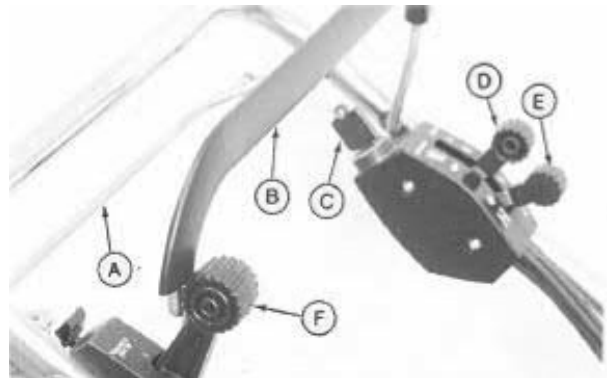
Do not mow without grass catcher or side discharge chute in place

M62531 -19-20JUN89

# Controls

## HANDLE CONTROLS

- A—Traction Clutch Lever (Self-Propelled Models Only)
- B—Blade Lockout/Stop Lever (All Models)
- C—Key (Model 14SE only)
- D—Gear Shift Lever (All Models Except 12PB and 14PB)
- E—Throttle Lever (All Models)
- F—Blade Engagement Lever (All Models)

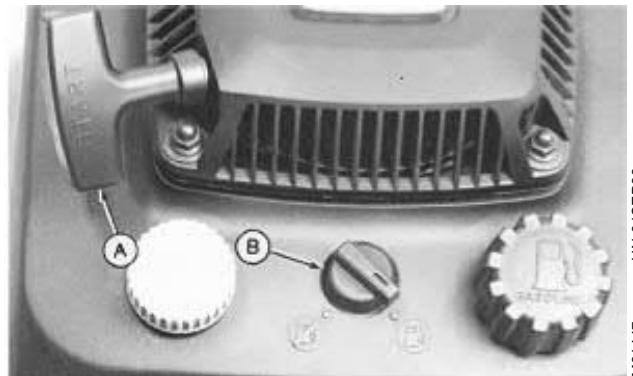


MX,CTBV,A -19-10AUG88

M61446 -UN-01SEP88

## 4-CYCLE ENGINE CONTROLS

- A—Starter Handle
- B—Fuel Shutoff Knob

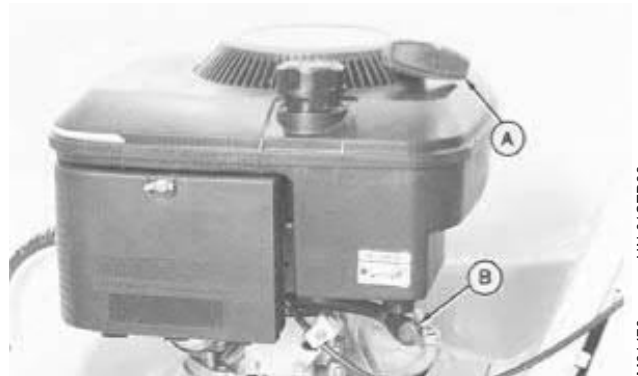


MX,CTBV,B -19-10AUG88

M61447 -UN-01SEP88

## 2-CYCLE ENGINE CONTROLS

- A—Starter Handle
- B—Fuel Shutoff Knob



MX,CTBV,C -19-10AUG88

M61476 -UN-01SEP88

## MOWER CONTROLS

- A—Cutting Height Lever
- B—Handle Height Knob
- C—Fold-Handle Knob



MX,CTBV,D -19-10AUG88

M61448 -UN-06OCT88

# Operation

## ADJUSTING CUTTING HEIGHT

**CAUTION:** Before you adjust levers, stop engine.

**IMPORTANT:** Adjust all levers to same height except when you mow in **LOWEST** (1/2-in. or 13-mm) position.

For **LOWEST** position:

—Put front wheel levers in 1/2-in. (13-mm) notch: first rear notch.

—Put rear wheel levers in 1-in. (25-mm) notch: second rear notch.



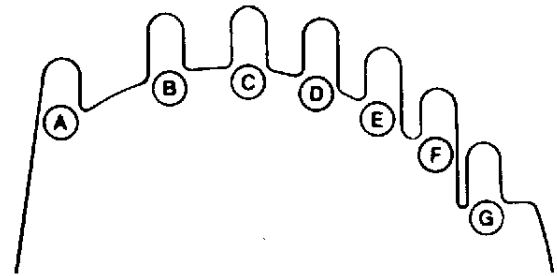
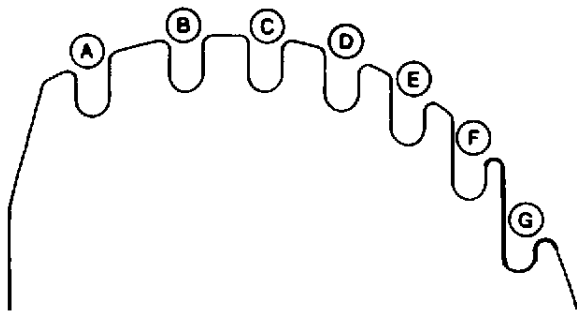
M61449 -UN-01SEP88

Move each wheel lever to desired position.

Cutting height range: 1/2—3-1/2 in. (13—90 mm).

To change cutting height 1/2 in. (13 mm), move lever one notch.

MX.OPBV,A -19-10AUG88



M73111 -UN-21NOV89

A—1/2 in. (13 mm)  
B—1 in. (25 mm)

C—1-1/2 in. (38 mm)  
D—2 in. (50 mm)

E—2-1/2 in. (64 mm)  
F—3 in. (75 mm)

G—3-1/2 in. (90 mm)

*Right Side of Mower*

Cutting height range: 1/2—3-1/2 in. (13—90 mm).

To change cutting height 1/2 in. (13 mm), move lever one notch.

MX.OPBV,A1 -19-15NOV89

## ADJUSTING HANDLE HEIGHT

1. Loosen knob on each side.
2. Adjust handle to desired position.
3. Tighten knobs.



MX.OPBV,B -19-10AUG88

M61450 -UN-13OCT88

## ELECTRIC STARTING—MODEL 14SE ONLY

**⚠ CAUTION:** Wear close-fitting clothing and safety equipment. Keep hands, feet, and clothing away from deck when engine is running.

1. Open fuel shutoff valve (A).



MX.OPBV,C -19-10AUG88

M61451 -UN-01SEP88

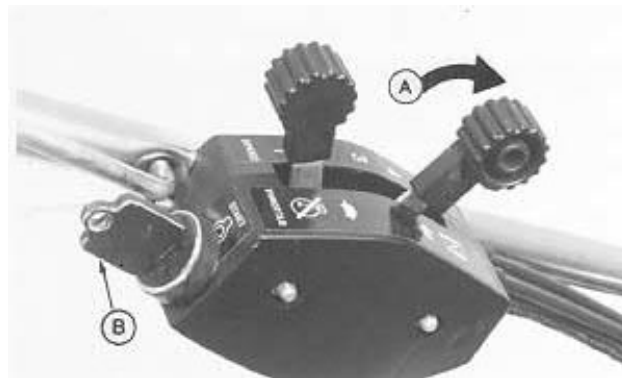
2. COLD ENGINE: Move throttle lever (A) to CHOKE position.

WARM ENGINE: Move throttle lever to FAST position.

3. Turn key (B) to START position. Release key when engine starts.

*NOTE: If battery is low, start engine with recoil starter. See MANUAL STARTING in this section.*

*NOTE: Key will not stop engine. To stop engine, pull throttle all the way to rear.*



MX.OPBV,D -19-10AUG88

M61452 -UN-01SEP88

## MANUAL STARTING

**CAUTION:** Wear close-fitting clothing and safety equipment. Keep hands, feet, and clothing away from deck when engine is running.

1. Open fuel shutoff valve:  
—4-Cycle engine: See ELECTRIC STARTING in this section.  
—2-Cycle engine: Shown at right.



MX.OPBV,E -19-10AUG88

M61478 -UN-01SEP88

2. COLD ENGINE: Move throttle lever to CHOKE position as shown.

WARM ENGINE: Move throttle lever to FAST position (rabbit).

3. Put foot on foot pad (top, left side of deck).
4. Pull starter handle until you feel resistance. Then pull fast and steady.
5. When engine starts, return rope slowly.

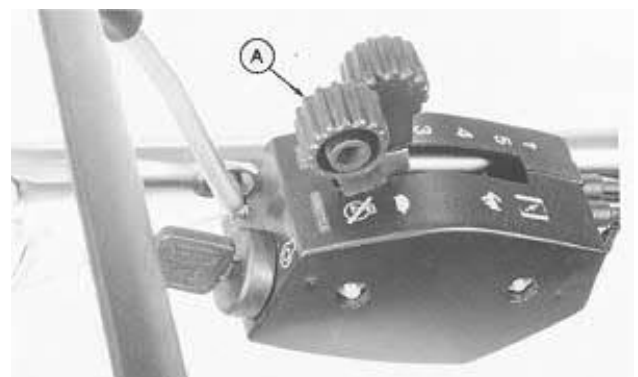


MX.OPBV,F -19-10AUG88

M61480 -UN-01SEP88

## STOPPING ENGINE

To stop engine, pull throttle lever (A) to STOP position.



MX.OPBV,F1 -19-25MAY89

M61556 -UN-07DEC88



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## BLADE OPERATION

**CAUTION:** Keep hands, feet and clothing away from blade when engine is running. If blade does not stop within 3 seconds after you release lever, see your John Deere dealer.

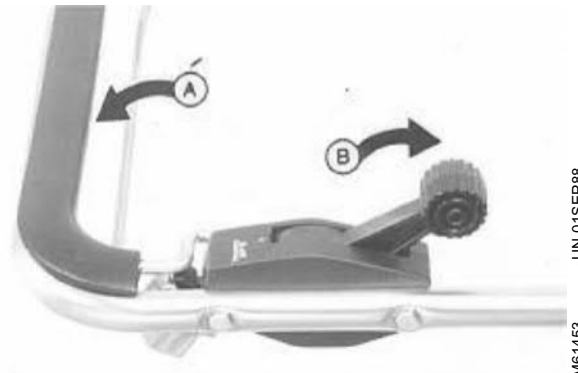
Do not engage blade in heavy grass or engine may stop.

### ENGAGE BLADE:

- Pull and hold lever (A) against handle.
- Push lever (B) quickly until it latches.

DISENGAGE BLADE: Release lever (A).

**CAUTION:** Do not tape lever (A) to handle. If lever (B) does not latch, do not tape it or hold it in latch position. See your John Deere dealer.



M61453 -UN-01SEP88

MX.OPBV,G -19-10AUG88

## FORWARD TRAVEL OPERATION—SELF-PROPELLED MODELS

TO TRAVEL FORWARD: Pull lever (A) to handle and hold.

TO STOP FORWARD TRAVEL: Release lever.

Release lever before you turn.

*NOTE: Rear wheels will make a clicking noise when you push mower forward. This means drivetrain is operating correctly.*



M61454 -UN-01SEP88

MX.OPBV,H -19-10AUG88

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