

**JOHN DEERE**  
**WORLDWIDE COMMERCIAL & CONSUMER**  
**EQUIPMENT DIVISION**

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**Spin-Steer Lawn Tractor**  
**SST15, SST16 and SST18**

OMM147096 L2

**OPERATOR'S MANUAL**



**JOHN DEERE**

**⚠ WARNING:** The Engine Exhaust from this product contains chemicals known to the State of California to cause cancer, birth defects or other reproductive harm.

California Proposition 65 Warning

North American Version  
Litho in U.S.A.

# INTRODUCTION

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## Thank You for Purchasing a John Deere Product

We appreciate having you as a customer and wish you many years of safe and satisfied use of your machine.

## Using Your Operator's Manual

This manual is an important part of your machine and should remain with the machine when you sell it.

Reading your operator's manual will help you and others avoid personal injury or damage to the machine.

Information given in this manual will provide the operator with the safest and most effective use of the machine.

Knowing how to operate this machine safely and correctly will allow you to train others who may operate this machine.

If you have an attachment, use the safety and operating information in the attachment operator's manual along with the machine operator's manual to operate the attachment safely and correctly.

This manual and safety signs on your machine may also be available in other languages (see your authorized dealer to order).

Sections in your operator's manual are placed in a specific order to help you understand all the safety messages and learn the controls so you can operate this machine safely. You can also use this manual to answer any specific operating or servicing questions. A convenient index located at the end of this book will help you to find needed information quickly.

The machine shown in this manual may differ slightly from your machine, but will be similar enough to help you understand our instructions.

RIGHT-HAND and LEFT-HAND sides are determined by facing in the direction the machine will travel when going forward. When you see a broken line arrow (----->), the item referred to is hidden from view.

Before delivering this machine, your dealer performed a predelivery inspection to ensure best performance.

## Special Messages

Your manual contains special messages to bring attention to potential safety concerns, machine damage as well as helpful operating and servicing information. Please read all the information carefully to avoid injury and machine damage.



**CAUTION: Avoid injury!** This symbol and text highlight potential hazards or death to the operator or bystanders that may occur if the hazards or procedures are ignored.

**IMPORTANT: Avoid damage!** This text is used to tell the operator of actions or conditions that might result in damage to the machine.

**NOTE: General information is given throughout the manual that may help the operator in the operation or service of the machine.**

# PRODUCT IDENTIFICATION

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## Record Identification Numbers

### Spin-Steer Lawn Tractor

#### SST15, SST16 and SST18

PIN (050001-)

If you need to contact an Authorized Service Center for information on servicing, always provide the product model and identification numbers.

You will need to locate the model and identification numbers for the product and record the information in the spaces provided below.

DATE OF PURCHASE:

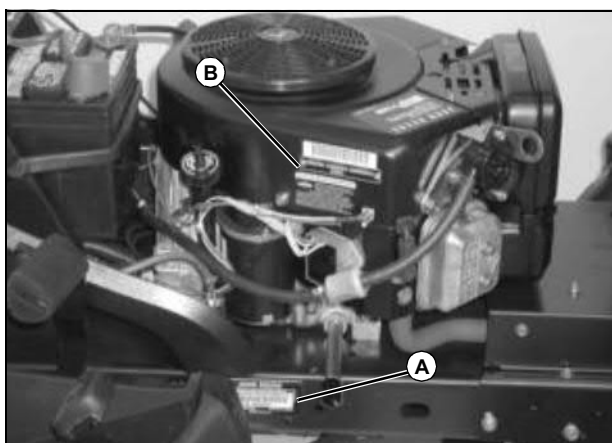
\_\_\_\_\_

DEALER NAME:

\_\_\_\_\_

DEALER PHONE:

\_\_\_\_\_



MX4898

**Picture Note: Right side of model SST18 shown.**

- PRODUCT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (A):

-----

- ENGINE SERIAL NUMBER (B):

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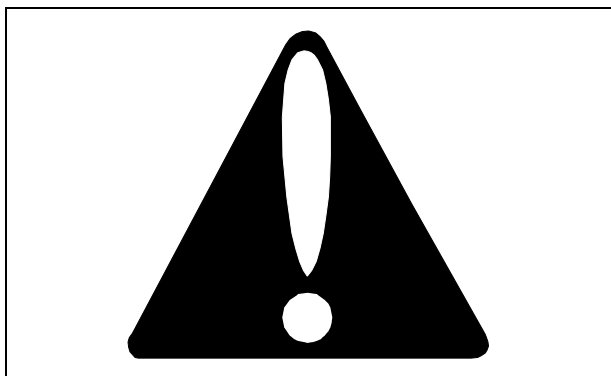
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Consumer Equipment Division  
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OMM147096 L2 - English

# SAFETY

## Understanding The Machine Safety Labels



Safety-Alert Symbol

The machine safety labels shown in this section are placed in important areas on your machine to draw attention to potential safety hazards.

On your machine safety labels, the words DANGER, WARNING, and CAUTION are used with this safety-alert symbol. DANGER identifies the most serious hazards.

The operator's manual also explains any potential safety hazards whenever necessary in special safety messages that are identified with the word, CAUTION, and the safety-alert symbol.

## DANGER: ROTATING BLADES CUT OFF ARMS AND LEGS



MX4900; M143359b

- Do not mow when children or others are around
- Do not mow in reverse
- Look down and behind before and while backing
- Never carry children - even with blades off

## WARNING: AVOID SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH



MX4900; M143359a

- Drive up and down slopes, not across
- Avoid sudden turns
- If machine stops going uphill, stop blade and back down slowly
- Keep safety devices (guards, shields, and switches) in place and working
- Read operator's manual
- When leaving machine:
  - Stop engine
  - Set park brake
  - Remove key
- Do not drive where machine could slip or tip
- Remove objects that could be thrown by blade

## WARNING



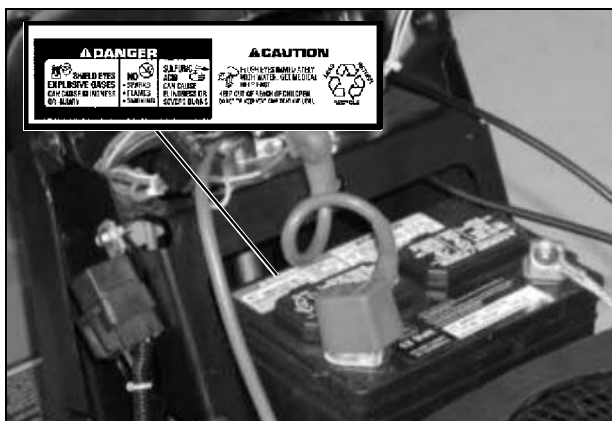
MX15956; M146577

**Picture Note: On 42M and 48C mower decks, two decals, one on each mower deck lift bracket.**

- To avoid injury from loaded spring, read operator's manual before changing attachments.

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## DANGER - CAUTION: POISON



MX7563; M10556

### Picture Note: Located on Battery

- Shield eyes, explosive gases can cause blindness or injury.
- No sparks, flames, smoking.
- Sulfuric acid can cause blindness or severe burns.
- Flush eyes immediately with water. Get medical help fast.
- Keep out of reach of children.
- Do not tip.
- Keep vent caps tight and level.

## Warning



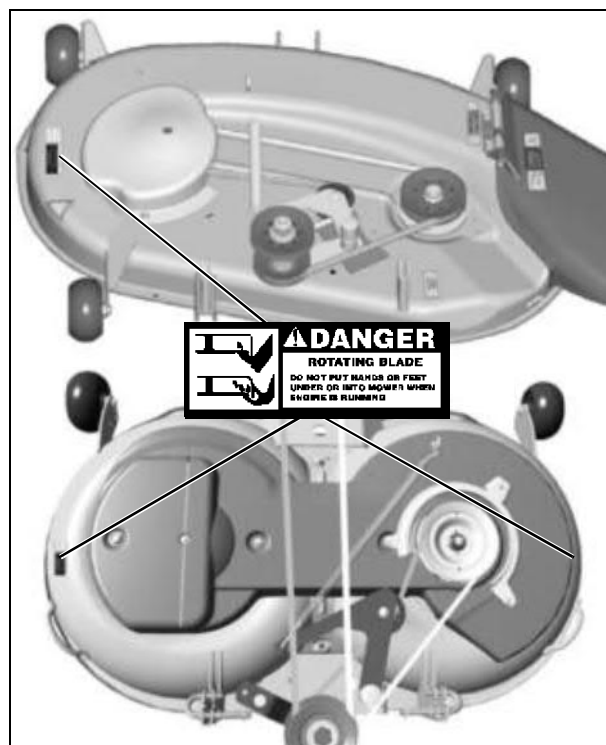
MX7565; MX4878

### Picture Note: Label is located on Briggs and Stratton engine only.

- Read and follow Operating Instructions before running engine.
- Gasoline is flammable. Allow engine to cool at least 2 minutes before refueling.

- Engines emit carbon monoxide, DO NOT run in enclosed area.

## DANGER: ROTATING BLADE



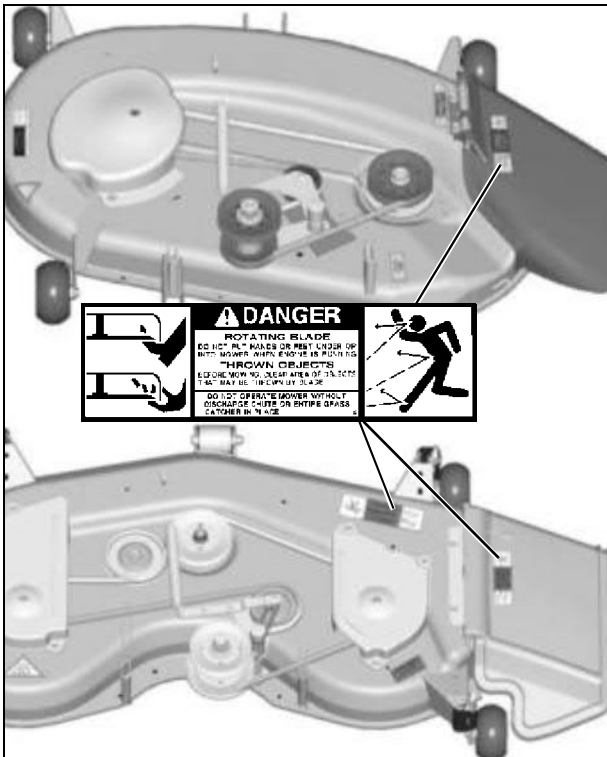
MX4889; MX15957; M118610

### Picture Note: Top photo; 42C and 48C Mower Decks, one decal on left side. 42C deck is used for photo purposes. Bottom photo; Freedom42 Mower Deck, two decals, one on each side.

- Do not put hands or feet under or into mower when engine is running.

# SAFETY

## DANGER: ROTATING BLADE - THROWN OBJECTS



MX4889; MX4894: M47637

**Picture Note:** Top photo, 42C: One decal on discharge chute. Bottom photo, 48C: Two decals, one on discharge chute and one on right side of mower deck.

- Do not put hands or feet under or into mower when engine is running.
- Before mowing, clear area of objects that may be thrown by blade.
- Do not operate mower without discharge chute or entire grass catcher in place.

## DANGER



MX4889; M97148

**Picture Note:** On 42C: One decal on right side of mower deck.

- To avoid injury from rotating blades and thrown objects:
- Keep hands and feet away from rotating blades.
- Keep bystanders a safe distance away.
- Do not operate mower without discharge chute or entire grass catcher in place.

## Emission Control System Certification Label

**NOTE:** *Tampering with emission controls and components by unauthorized personnel may result in severe fines or penalties. Emission controls and components can only be adjusted by EPA and/or CARB authorized service centers. Contact your John Deere Commercial and Consumer Equipment Retailer concerning emission controls and component questions.*

The presence of an emissions label signifies that the engine has been certified with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and/or California Air Resources Board (CARB).

The emissions warranty applies only to those engines marketed by John Deere that have been certified by the EPA and/or CARB; and used in the United States and Canada in off-road mobile equipment.

## Emission Compliance Period

If your engine has the emission compliance category listed on the emission control system certification or air index label, this indicates the number of operating hours for which the engine has been certified to meet EPA and/or CARB emission requirements. The following table provides the

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engine compliance period in hours associated with the category found on the certification label.

Agency	Category	Hours
EPA	C	250
EPA	B	500
EPA	A	1000
CARB	Moderate	125
CARB	Intermediate	250
CARB	Extended	500

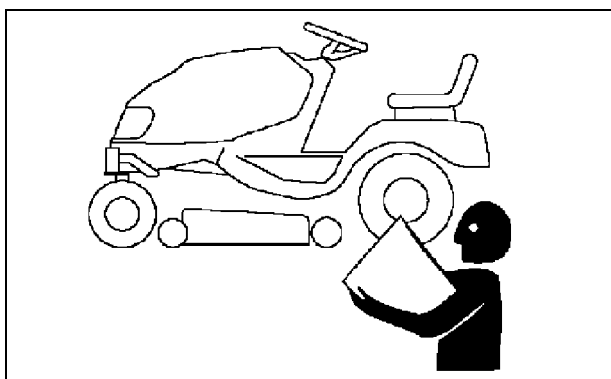
## Certification

Your mower has been certified by an independent laboratory for compliance with American National Standard B-71.1, "Safety Specifications" for Power Lawn Mowers, Lawn and Garden Tractors, and Lawn Tractors.

## Canadian Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Compliance

This spark ignition system complies with Canadian ICES-002.

## Operating Safely



- Read, understand and follow all instructions in the manual and on the machine before starting. In addition to reading your Operator's Manual, view your Mowing Safety Tips Video.
- Practice operating the Spin-Steer in a large open area with the blades off. Keep practicing until you feel confident in your maneuvering and driving skills.

- Only allow responsible adults, who have practiced driving the Spin-Steer and are familiar with the instructions to operate the machine. Local restrictions may restrict the age of the operator.
- Be thoroughly familiar with the controls and the proper use of the machine before starting.
- Inspect machine before you operate. Be sure hardware is tight. Repair or replace damaged, badly worn, or missing parts. Replace faulty silencers. Be sure guards and shields are in good condition and fastened in place. Make any necessary adjustments before you operate.
- Before using, always visually inspect to see that the blades, blade bolts and the mower assembly are not worn and damaged. Replace worn and damaged blades and bolts in sets to preserve balance.
- Be sure all drives are in neutral and parking brake is locked before starting engine. Only start engine from the operator's position.
- Do not change the engine governor settings or overspeed the engine. Operating the engine at excessive speed can increase the hazard of personal injury.
- Do not operate mower without discharge chute or entire grass catcher in place. Never operate with the discharge deflector raised, removed, or altered, unless using a grass catcher.
- Check brake action before you operate. Adjust or service brakes as necessary.
- Stop machine if anyone enters the area.
- If you hit an object or if abnormal vibration occurs, stop the machine and inspect it. Make repairs before you operate. Keep machine and attachments properly maintained and in good working order.
- Be aware of the mower discharge direction and make sure that no one is in the path of the discharge direction.
- Do not leave machine unattended when it is running.
- Only operate during daylight or with good artificial light.
- Slow down and be careful of traffic when operating near or crossing roadways. Stop blades before crossing roads or sidewalks. Use care when approaching blind corners, shrubs, trees, or other objects that may obscure vision.
- Do not operate machine if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Use only accessories and attachments approved by the manufacturer of the machine. Keep safety labels visible when installing accessories and attachments.
- Older adults are involved in a large percentage of riding mower accidents involving injury. These operators should evaluate their ability to operate a mower safely enough to protect the operator and others from serious injury.

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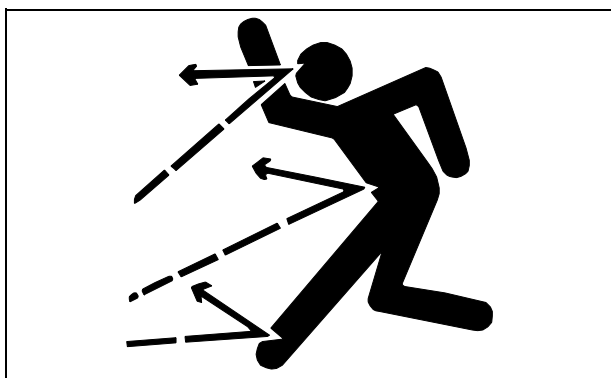
- Do not wear radio or music headphones. Safe service and operation requires your full attention.
- Disengage drive to attachments when transporting or not in use.
- Reduce the throttle setting during engine run-out and, if the engine is provided with a fuel shut-off valve, turn the fuel off at the conclusion of mowing.
- When machine is left unattended, stored, or parked, lower the mower deck unless a positive mechanical lock is used.

## Using a Spark Arrestor

The engine in this machine is not equipped with a spark arrestor muffler. It is a violation of California Public Resource Code Section 4442 to use or operate this engine on or near any forest-covered, brush-covered or grass-covered land unless the exhaust system is equipped with a spark arrestor meeting any applicable local or state laws. Other states or federal areas may have similar laws.

A spark arrestor for your machine may be available from your authorized dealer. An installed spark arrestor must be maintained in good working order by the operator.

## Checking Mowing Area



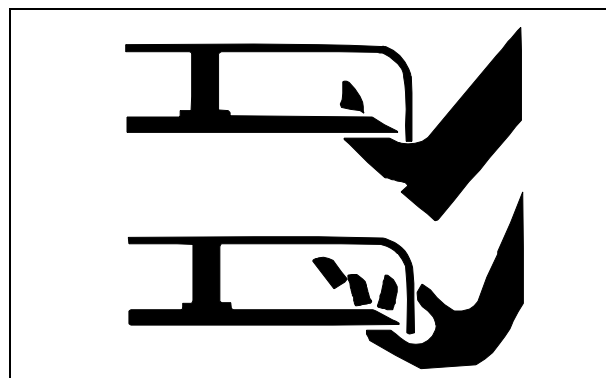
- Clear mowing area of objects that might be thrown. Keep people and pets out of mowing area.
- Low-hanging branches and similar obstacles can injure the operator or interfere with mowing operation. Before mowing, identify potential obstacles such as low-hanging branches, and trim or remove those obstacles.
- Study mowing area. Set up a safe mowing pattern. Do not mow where traction or stability is doubtful.
- Test drive area with mower lowered but not running. Slow down when you travel over rough ground.

## Parking Safely

1. Stop machine on a level surface, not on a slope.
2. Disengage mower blades or any other attachments.
3. Lower attachments to the ground.
4. Lock the park brake.
5. Stop the engine.
6. Remove the key.
7. Wait for engine and all moving parts to stop before you leave the operator's seat.
8. Close fuel shut-off valve, if your machine is equipped.
9. Disconnect the negative battery cable or remove the spark plug wire (for gasoline engines) before servicing the machine.

## Rotating Blades are Dangerous

**HELP PREVENT SERIOUS OR FATAL ACCIDENTS:**

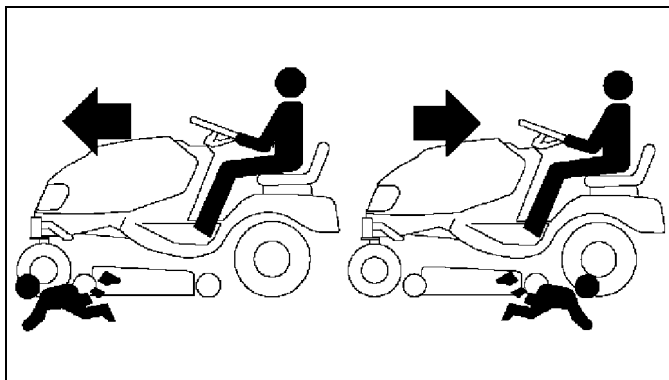


- Rotating blades can cut off arms and legs, and throw objects. Failure to observe safety instructions could result in serious injury or death.
- Keep hands, feet and clothing away from mower deck when engine is running.
- Be alert at all times, drive forward carefully. People, especially children can move quickly into the mowing area before you know it.
- Before backing up, stop mower blades or attachments and look down and behind the machine carefully, especially for children.
- Do not mow in reverse.
- Shut off blades when you are not mowing.
- Park machine safely before leaving the operator's station for any reason including emptying the catchers or unplugging the chute.

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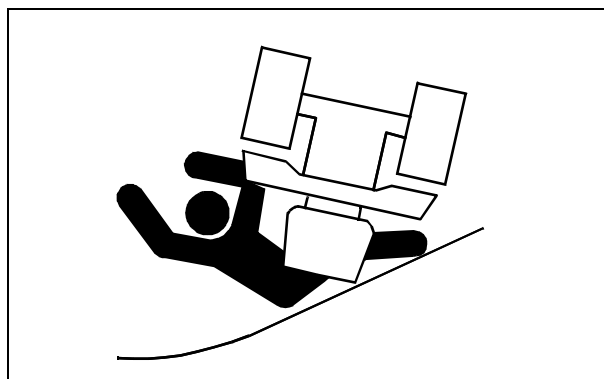
- The mower blades should stop in approximately five seconds when the mower is disengaged. If you believe that your blades may not be stopping in that period of time, take your machine to your authorized dealer where they can safely check and service your machine.

## PROTECT CHILDREN:



- Tragic accidents can occur if the operator is not alert to the presence of children. Keep children out of the mowing area and under the watchful care of another responsible adult.
- Never assume that children will remain where you last saw them. Children are attracted to mowing activity, stay alert to the presence of children.
- Keep children indoors when you are mowing. Turn the machine off if a child enters the mowing area.
- Use extra care when you come to blind corners, shrubs, trees, or other objects that may block your vision.
- Do not let children or an untrained person operate the machine.
- Do not carry or let children ride on any attachment or machine even with the blades off. Do not tow children in a cart or trailer.

## Avoid Tipping



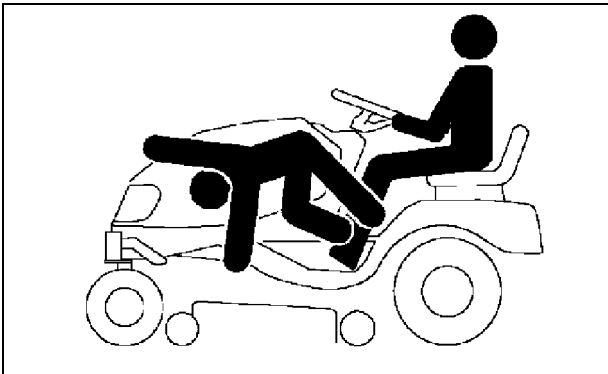
- Slopes are a major factor related to loss-of-control and tip-over accidents, which can result in severe injury or death. All slopes require extra caution. Because this tractor operates so differently we absolutely do not recommend mowing on slopes greater than a ten-degree gradual rise.
- Drive up and down a hill - not across.
- Any loss of tire traction will also result in loss of braking and steering control. Do not use machine on a slope greater than recommended. Loss of tire traction, and loss steering and brake control could result in serious injury.
- Keep all movement on slopes slow and gradual. Do not make sudden changes in speed or direction.
- Use a slow speed when operating on a slope. Choose a low gear or speed so that you will not have to stop or shift while on the slope.
- Tires may lose traction on slopes even though the brakes are functioning properly.
- Do not turn on slopes unless necessary. Turn slowly and turn downhill. Do not shift to neutral and coast downhill.
- Keep away from drop-offs, ditches and embankments. The machine could suddenly turn over if a wheel is over the edge of a cliff or ditch, or if an edge caves in.
- Use extra care with grass catchers or other attachments. These can change the stability of the machine. Do not use grass catcher on steep slopes.
- Stay alert for holes and other hidden hazards in the terrain. Uneven terrain could overturn the machine. Tall grass can hide obstacles.
- Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for wheel weights or counterweights for added stability when operating on slopes or using front or rear mounted attachments. Remove weights when not required.
- Do not stop when going up hill or down hill. If machine stops going up hill or tires lose traction, disengage mower blades and back straight down slowly.
- Use recommended rear weights or front weights for

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added stability when using front or rear mounted attachments or grass catchers. Remove weights when not required.

- Operating machine when grass is wet can cause reduced traction and sliding.
- Do not try to stabilize the machine by putting your foot on the ground.

## Keep Riders Off



- Only allow the operator on the machine. Keep riders off.
- Riders on the machine or attachment may be struck by foreign objects or thrown off the machine causing serious injury.
- Riders obstruct the operator's view resulting in the machine being operated in an unsafe manner.

## Towing Loads Safely

- Stopping distance increases with speed and weight of towed load. Travel slowly and allow extra time to stop.
- Total towed weight must not exceed combined weight of pulling machine, ballast and operator. Use counterweights or wheel weights as described in the attachment or pulling machine operator manual.
- Excessive towed load can cause loss of traction and loss of control on slopes. Reduce towed weight when operating on slopes.
- Never allow children or others in or on towed equipment.
- Use only approved hitches. Tow only with a machine that has a hitch designed for towing. Do not attach towed equipment except at the approved hitch point.
- Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for weight limits for towed equipment and towing on slopes.
- If you cannot back up a slope with a towed load, the slope is too steep to operate on with the towed load.

Reduce the towed load or do not operate.

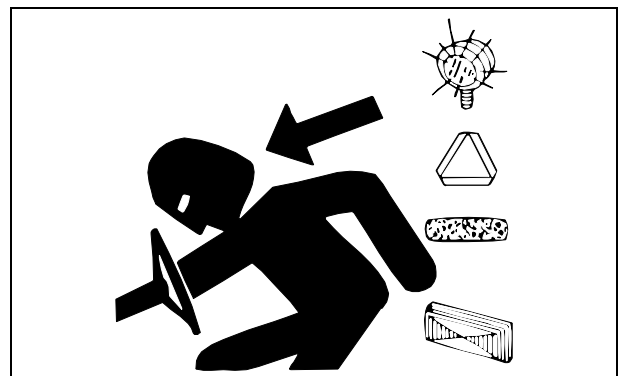
- Do not turn sharply. Use additional caution when turning or operating under adverse surface conditions. Use care when reversing.
- Do not shift to neutral and coast downhill.

## Wear Appropriate Clothing



- Always wear safety goggles or safety glasses with side shields when operating the machine.
- Wear close fitting clothing and safety equipment appropriate for the job.
- While mowing, always wear substantial footwear and long trousers. Do not operate the equipment when barefoot or wearing open sandals.
- Wear a suitable protective device such as earplugs. Loud noise can cause impairment or loss of hearing.

## Driving Safely on Public Roads



Avoid personal injury or death resulting from a collision with another vehicle on public roads:

- Use safety lights and devices. Slow moving machines when driven on public roads are hard to see, especially at

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# SAFETY

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night.

- Whenever driving on public roads, use flashing warning lights and turn signals according to local regulations. Extra flashing warning lights may need to be installed.

## Practice Safe Maintenance



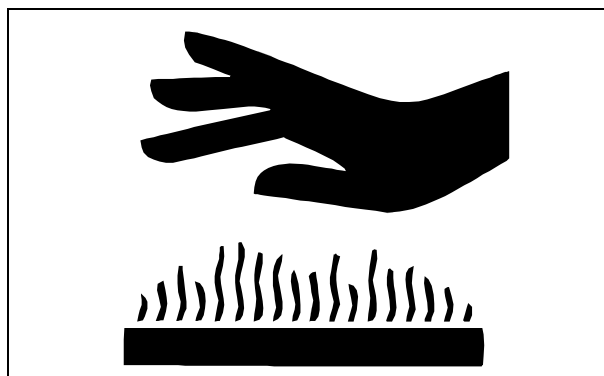
MIF

- Only qualified, trained adults should service this machine.
- Understand service procedure before doing work. Keep area clean and dry.
- Do not operate the engine in a confined space where dangerous carbon monoxide fumes can collect.
- Never lubricate, service, or adjust machine while it is moving. Wait for all movement to stop on machine before adjusting, cleaning or repairing.
- Keep safety devices in place and in working condition. Keep hardware tight.
- On multi-bladed machines, take care as rotating one blade can cause other blades to rotate.
- Keep hands, feet, clothing, jewelry, and long hair away from any moving parts, to prevent them from getting caught.
- Lower attachments to the ground before cleaning or servicing machine. Disengage all power and stop the engine. Lock park brake and remove the key. Let machine cool.
- Disconnect battery or remove spark plug wire (for gasoline engines) before making any repairs.
- Before servicing machine, carefully release pressure from any components with stored energy, such as hydraulic components.
- Keep all nuts and bolts tightened, especially blade attachment bolts.
- Securely support any machine elements that must be raised for service work. Use jack stands or lock service

latches to support components when needed.

- Never run engine unless park brake is locked.
- Use care when checking blades. Wrap blades or wear gloves and use caution when servicing them. Only replace blades. Never straighten or weld them.
- Keep all parts in good condition and properly installed. Fix damage immediately. Replace worn or broken parts. Replace all worn or damaged safety and instruction decals.
- Grass catcher components are subject to wear, damage, and deterioration which could expose moving parts or allow objects to be thrown. Check components frequently and replace with manufacturer's recommended parts when necessary.
- Charge batteries in an open, well-ventilated area, away from sparks. Unplug battery charger before connecting or disconnecting from the battery. Wear protective clothing and use insulated tools.
- Do not modify machine or safety devices. Unauthorized modifications may impair its function and safety.
- Check brake operation frequently. Adjust and service as needed.

## Prevent Fires



- Remove grass and debris from engine compartment and muffler area, before and after operating machine, especially after mowing or mulching in dry conditions.
- To reduce fire hazard, keep engine and engine compartment free of grass, leaves, or excessive grease.
- Clean up oil or fuel spillage.
- Allow engine to cool before storing in any enclosure.
- Never remove fuel cap, or add fuel with engine running or hot. Allow engine to cool for several minutes.
- Never store equipment with fuel in the tank inside a building where fumes may reach an open flame or spark.
- Always shut off fuel when storing or transporting

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machine.

## Tire Safety



Explosive separation of a tire and rim parts can cause serious injury or death:

- Do not attempt to mount a tire without the proper equipment and experience to perform the job.
- Always maintain the correct tire pressure. Do not inflate the tires above the recommended pressure. Never weld or heat a wheel and tire assembly. The heat can cause an increase in air pressure resulting in a tire explosion. Welding can structurally weaken or deform the wheel.
- When inflating tires, use a clip-on chuck and extension hose long enough to allow you to stand to one side and NOT in front of or over the tire assembly.
- Check tires for low pressure, cuts, bubbles, damaged rims or missing lug bolts and nuts.

## Handling Fuel Safely

**Fuel and fuel vapors are highly flammable:**



- Do not refuel machine while you smoke, when machine

is near an open flame or sparks, or when engine is running. Stop engine and allow to cool before filling.

- Never remove the fuel cap or add fuel with the engine running.
- Replace all fuel tanks and container caps securely.
- Never fill fuel tank or drain fuel from a machine in an enclosed area. Fill fuel tank outdoors.
- Prevent fires. Clean up spilled fuel immediately. If fuel is spilled on clothing, change clothing immediately. Do not attempt to start the engine but move the machine away from the area of spillage and avoid creating any source of ignition until fuel vapors have dissipated.
- Do not store fuel in container or machine with fuel in tank in a building where fumes may reach an open flame or spark.
- Prevent fire and explosion caused by static electric discharge. Use only non-metal, portable fuel containers approved by the Underwriter's Laboratory (U.L.) or the American Society for Testing & Materials (ASTM). If using a funnel, make sure it is plastic and has no screen or filter.

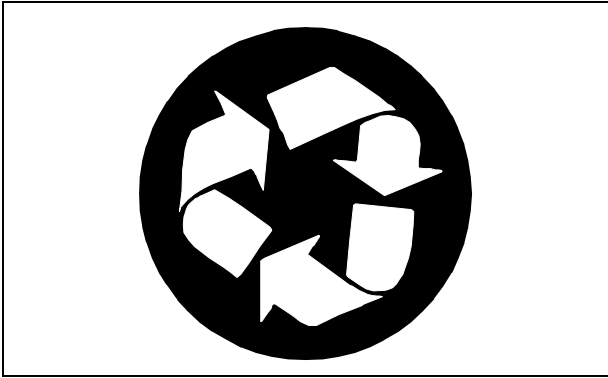


- Static electric discharge can ignite gasoline vapors in an ungrounded fuel container. Remove the fuel container from the bed of a machine or trailer or the trunk of a car and place on the ground away from the machine before filling. Keep nozzle in contact with container opening while filling. Do not use a nozzle lock-open device.
- When practical, remove equipment from trailers or truck beds and refuel them on the ground. If this is not possible, use a portable, plastic fuel container to refuel equipment on a truck bed or trailer.
- For gasoline engines, do not use gas with methanol. Methanol is harmful to your health and to the environment.

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## Handling Waste Product and Chemicals



Waste products, such as, used oil, fuel, coolant, brake fluid, and batteries, can harm the environment and people:

- Do not use beverage containers for waste fluids - someone may drink from them.
- See your local Recycling Center or authorized dealer to learn how to recycle or get rid of waste products.
- A Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) provides specific details on chemical products: physical and health hazards, safety procedures, and emergency response techniques. The seller of the chemical products used with your machine is responsible for providing the MSDS for that product.



**Suggest:**

**If the above button click is invalid.**

**Please download this document**

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**to download the complete manual.**

**Thank you so much for reading**

# OPERATING

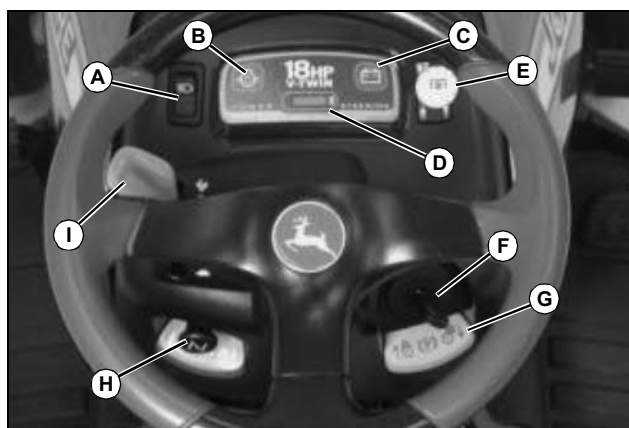
## Daily Operating Checklist

- Test safety systems.
- Check tire pressure.
- Check fuel level.
- Check engine oil level.
- Check transmission oil level.
- Remove grass and debris from engine compartment and muffler area, before and after operating machine.
- Clean area around transmission and steering switches.
- Clean air intake screen.
- Check area below machine for leaks.

## Avoid Damage to Plastic and Painted Surfaces

- Do not wipe plastic parts unless rinsed first.
- Insect repellent spray may damage plastic and painted surfaces. Do not spray insect repellent near machine.
- Be careful not to spill fuel on machine. Fuel may damage surface. Wipe up spilled fuel immediately.
- Prolonged exposure to sunlight will damage the hood surface.

## Operator Station Controls

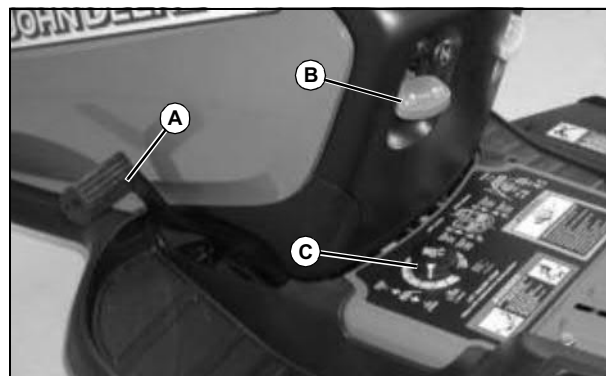


MX7574

Picture Note: Model SST18 shown

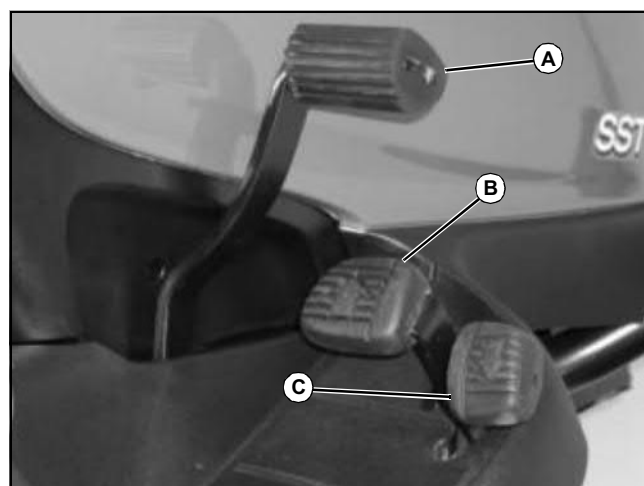
- A - Light Switch**
- B - Engine Oil Pressure Light (SST18 Only)**
- C - Battery Discharge Light (SST18 Only)**
- D - Hour Meter (SST16 and SST18 Only)**
- E - PTO Switch/Reverse Implement Option (RIO) Switch**

- F - Key Switch**
- G - Park Brake Lock Lever**
- H - Choke Lever**
- I - Throttle Lever**



MX4900

- A - Attachment Lift Pedal**
- B - Attachment Lift Lock Lever**
- C - Mower Height Control Knob**



MX7570

- A - Brake Pedal**
- B - Forward Travel Pedal**
- C - Reverse Travel Pedal**

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