

Safety Note #31

## FLAIL MOWER/SHREDDER SAFETY



Photograph Courtesy of Intermountain REC

Operating a flail mower/shredder involves the use of both a tractor and power take-off. Accordingly, operation of a flail mower/shredder requires not only awareness of tractor and power take-off safety hazards, but also those associated with the moving parts of the flail mower/shredder. Improper or inattentive operation of a flail mower/shredder can result in loss of life or injuries ranging from dismemberment to broken bones, lacerations, and contusions. See Safety Note #8 and Safety Note #11 for additional information about tractor safety and power take-off safety, respectively.

### Pre-Use Activities

- Thoroughly review and understand information provided in the flail mower/shredder operator's manual with particular attention given to descriptions of safety procedures.
- Before using, always inspect the flail mower/shredder for damage or disrepair and make sure all shields and guards are securely in place, including the power take-off shaft guard.
- If a flail mower/shredder fails the pre-use inspection, notify your supervisor and remove the mower/shredder from service by attaching a red tag that states "DO NOT USE." Complete red tag with appropriate information.
- Employees that use a flail mower/shredder shall be instructed annually on safe work practices and operational procedures for mower/shredder equipment.
- Flail mower/shredder operations are addressed under California Code of Regulations Title 8, Sections 3440, 3441, and 3445.

### Operating Precautions

- Passengers shall not be allowed on operating flail mower/shredder or tractor equipment.
- Prior to beginning a flail mower/shredder task, inspect the work area for hazards and obstructions.
- Before starting the tractor and engaging the flail mower/shredder, look for people or obstructions behind or ahead of the tractor and flail mower/shredder.
- Keep hands and feet away from moving flail mower/shredder parts.
- Never walk or stand behind an operating flail mower/shredder.
- When operating in undulating terrain, pull the flail mower/shredder up and down slopes.
- Always disengage the power take-off, set the parking brake, stop the tractor engine, and assure the flail mower/shredder is de-energized before servicing, adjusting, cleaning, or unclogging flail mower/shredder equipment.
- Only dismount (or mount) a tractor when the engine is shut off.