

Pt. 1205

16 CFR Ch. II (1–12 Edition)

## PART 1205—SAFETY STANDARD FOR WALK-BEHIND POWER LAWN MOWERS

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**SOURCE:** 44 FR 10024, Feb. 15, 1979, unless otherwise noted.

### Subpart A—The Standard

#### § 1205.1 Scope of the standard.

(a) *General.* This subpart A of part 1205 is a consumer product safety standard which prescribes safety requirements for certain walk-behind power lawn mowers, including labeling and performance requirements. The performance requirements of the standard apply to rotary mowers. The labeling requirements apply to both rotary and reel-type mowers. The standard is intended to reduce the risk of injury to consumers caused by contact, primarily of the foot and hand, with the rotating blade of the mower. A detailed discussion of the risk of injury and of the anticipated costs, benefits, and other factors associated with the standard is contained in §1205.8 *Findings*.

(b) *Scope.* (1) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, all walk-behind rotary and reel-type power lawn

mowers manufactured or imported on or after the effective date of the standard are subject to the requirements of this standard if they are “consumer products”. “Walk behind power lawn mower” is defined as a grass cutting machine with a minimum cutting width of 12 in (305 mm) that employs an engine or motor as a power source. Section 3(a)(1) of the Consumer Product Safety Act (“CPSA”), 15 U.S.C. 2052(a)(1), defines the term *consumer product* as an “article, or component part thereof, produced or distributed (i) for sale to a consumer for use in or around a permanent or temporary household or residence, a school, in recreation, or otherwise, or (ii) for the personal use, consumption or enjoyment of a consumer in or around a permanent or temporary household or residence, a school, in recreation, or otherwise.” The term does not include products that are not customarily produced or distributed for sale to, or for the use or consumption by, or enjoyment of, a consumer.

(2) It is unlawful to manufacture for sale, offer for sale, distribute in commerce, or import into the United States any product subject to this standard that is not in conformity with the standard. The Commission is not applying the standard to rental transactions or to the ultimate sale of used rental mowers by rental firms.

(c) *Exclusions*—(1) *General.* Mowers that have all three of the following characteristics are not covered by the standard:

(i) A cutting width of 30 in (762 mm) or greater,

(ii) A weight of 200 lb (90.7 kg) or more, and

(iii) For engine-powered mowers, an engine of 8 horsepower (6 kw) or more.

(2) *Reel-type mowers.* Reel-type power lawn mowers need not meet the performance requirements of the standard but they must be labeled as required by §1205.6.

#### § 1205.2 Effective date.

This standard applies to all rotary walk behind power lawn mowers manufactured after June 30, 1982, except §1205.6 *Warning labels*, applies to rotary and reel-type walk-behind power lawn

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mowers manufactured after December 31, 1979.

[44 FR 10024, Feb. 15, 1979, as amended 45 FR 86417, Dec. 31, 1980]

### § 1205.3 Definitions.

(a) As used in this part 1205:

(1) *Blade* means any rigid or semi-rigid device or means that is intended to cut grass during mowing operations and includes all blades of a multi-bladed mower.

(2) *Blade tip circle* means the path described by the outermost point of the blade as it moves about its axis.

(3) *Crack* means a visible external fissure in a solid body caused by tensile, compressive, or shear forces.

(4) *Cutting width* means the blade tip circle diameter or, for a multi-bladed mower, the width, measured perpendicular to the forward direction, of a composite of all blade tip circles.

(5) *Deform* means any visible alteration of shape or dimension of a body caused by stresses induced by external forces.

(6) *Engine* means a power producing device which converts thermal energy from a fuel into mechanical energy.

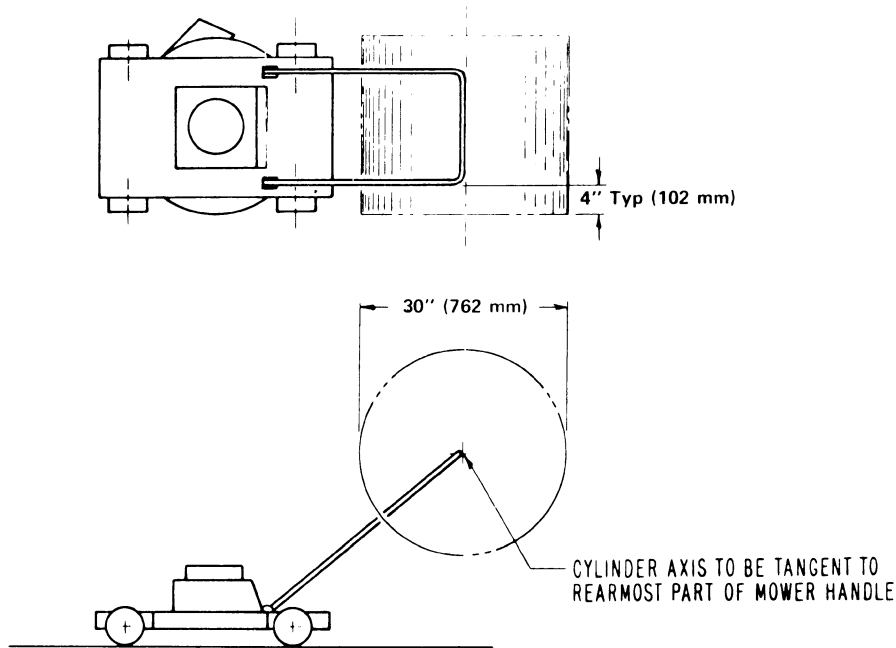
(7) *Manual starting* means starting the mower engine with power obtained from the physical efforts of the operator.

(8) *Maximum operating speed* means the maximum revolutions per minute (rpm) obtainable by the engine or motor under the conditions of the particular test where the term is used. For an electrically powered mower, it is the speed attained when the mower is energized from a 60 Hz alternating current source that delivers a voltage no greater than 120 V and no less than 115 V at the power input to the mower, with the mower running. For a battery-powered mower, it is the speed attained after the battery has been fully charged in accordance with the mower manufacturer's instructions.

(9) *Motor* means a power producing device that converts electrical energy into mechanical energy.

(10) *Normal starting means* is the primary mechanism intended to be actuated by the operator to start a mower's engine or motor (e.g., the cord mechanism of a manual start engine, the switch of an electric motor, or a power start mechanism).

(11) *Operating control zone* means the space enclosed by a cylinder with a radius of 15 in (381 mm) having a horizontal axis that is (1) perpendicular to the fore-aft centerline of the mower and (2) tangent to the rearmost part of the mower handle, extending 4 in (102 mm) beyond the outermost portion of each side of the handle (See Fig. 1).



**FIGURE 1 – OPERATING CONTROL ZONE**

(12) *Power source* means an engine or motor.

(13) *Reel-type mower* means a lawn mower which cuts grass by rotating one or more helically formed blades about a horizontal axis to provide a shearing action with a stationary cutter bar or bed knife.

(14) *Rotary mower* means a power lawn mower in which one or more cutting blades rotate in essentially a horizontal plane about at least one vertical axis.

(15) *Separate* means to cause to have any apparent relative displacement induced by external forces.

(16) *Shield* means a part or an assembly which restricts access to a hazardous area. For the purposes of this part 1205, the blade housing is considered a shield.

(17) *Stress* means a force acting across a unit area in a solid material in resisting separation, compacting, or sliding that tends to be induced by external forces.

(18) *Top of the mower's handles* means the uppermost portion(s) of the handle that would be gripped by an operator in the normal operating position.

(19) *Walk-behind power lawn mower* means a grass cutting machine either pushed or self-propelled, with a minimum cutting width of 12 in (305 mm) that employs an engine or a motor as a power source and is normally controlled by an operator walking behind the mower.

(b) Where applicable, the definitions in section 3 of the Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2052) apply to this part 1205.

[44 FR 10024, Feb. 15, 1979, as amended at 46 FR 54934, Nov. 5, 1981]

**§ 1205.4 Walk-behind rotary power mower protective shields.**

(a) *General requirements.* Walk-behind rotary power mowers shall meet the following requirements:

(1) When the foot probe of Fig. 2 is inserted under any point within the areas

to be probed during the foot probe test of paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the shields shall prevent the foot probe

from entering the path of the blade or causing any part of the mower to enter the path of the blade.

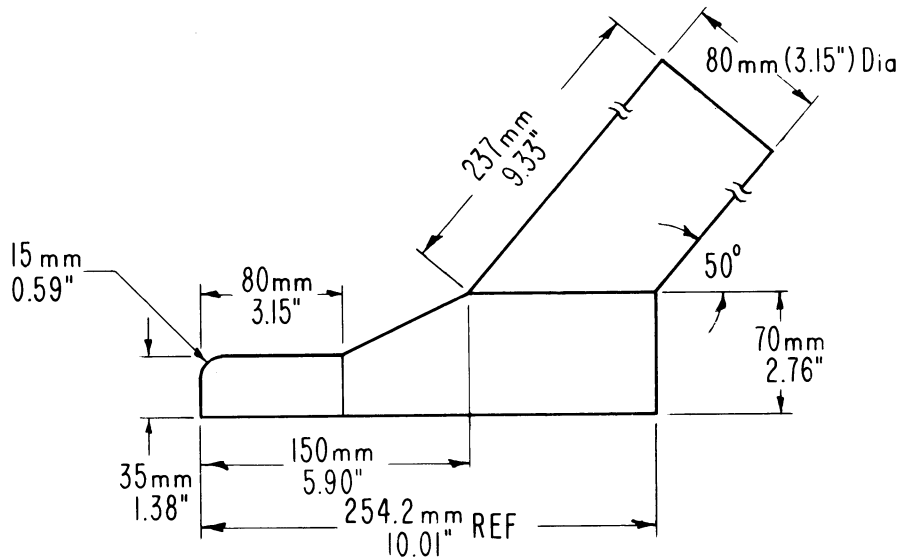
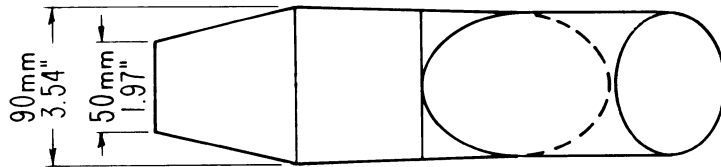


FIG 2—FOOT PROBE

(2) Any shield located totally or partly within the areas to be probed, as defined in paragraph (b)(1)(ii) of this section, shall not permanently separate,

crack, or deform when the shield is subjected to a 50 lb (222 N) static tensile force, uniformly distributed over not less than half the length of the

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shield. The force shall be applied for at least 10 seconds in the direction which produces the maximum stress on the shield. While being tested, a shield shall be attached to the mower in the manner in which it is intended to be used. (This requirement does not apply to the housing.)

(3) During the obstruction test of paragraph (b)(2) of this section, shields shall not:

- (i) Stop the mower as a result of contact with the raised obstacle,
- (ii) Enter the path of the blade,
- (iii) Cause more than one wheel at a time to be lifted from the fixture surface.

(b) *Shield tests—general—(1) Foot probe test.* (i) The following test conditions shall be observed:

(A) The test shall be performed on a smooth level surface.

(B) Pneumatic tires, when present, shall be inflated to the cold pressures recommended by the mower manufacturer.

(C) The mower housing shall be adjusted to its highest setting relative to the ground.

(D) The blade shall be adjusted to its lowest position relative to the blade housing.

(E) The mower shall be secured so that the mower may not move horizontally but is free to move vertically.

(ii) *Areas to be probed.* (A)(1) The minimum area to be probed shall include an area both 60 degrees to the right and 60 degrees to the left of the rear of the fore-aft centerline of the cutting width. For single-blade mowers, these angles shall be measured from a point on this fore-aft centerline which is at the center of the blade tip circle (see Fig. 3). For multi-blade mowers, these angles shall be measured from a point on the fore-aft centerline of the cutting width which is one half of the cutting width forward of the rearmost point of the composite of all the blade tip circles (See Fig. 4).

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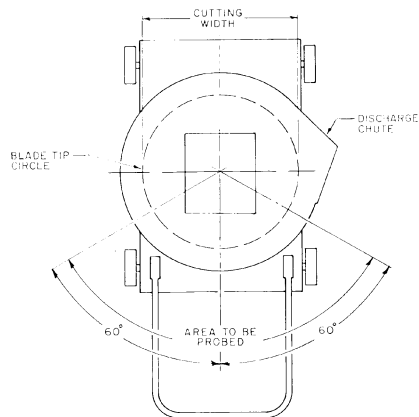


FIGURE 3 - AREA TO BE PROBED

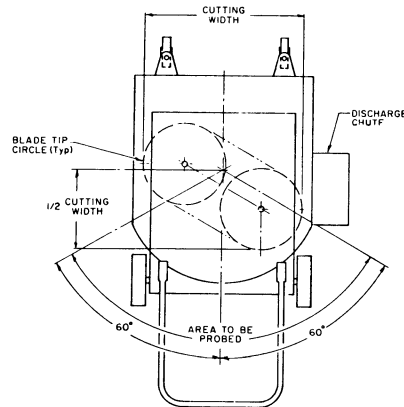


FIGURE 4 - AREA TO BE PROBED  
MULTI-BLADE MOWERS

(2) For a mower with a swing-over handle, the areas to be probed shall be determined as in paragraph (b)(1)(ii)(A)(1) of this section from both possible rear positions. (See Fig. 5.)

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