

## SAFETY ANALYSIS

A safety analysis determines what hazards a product may pose in foreseeable use. All riding mowers **MUST** have Roll-Over Protective Structures (ROPS) to prevent serious injury or death. They are 99% effective. Absent ROPS there is no way to protect the operator.

### Identify the Hazard – What are the Hazards -

What are the hazards of riding mowers?  
The hazards are tip-overs and rollovers.  
Can they be fully controlled? **NO!**

### 1. Design Out / Eliminate the Hazard -

Can these hazards be completely eliminated or minimized? **NO!** Tip-overs and rollovers can't be completely eliminated.

### 2. Guard Against the Hazard -

Can anything be done to guard against these hazards? **YES!** Add ROPS.

### 3. Warnings & Instructions -

Warnings and instructions **ARE NOT** a substitute for ROPS. Warnings and instructions do not prevent injury in a rollover. Warnings and instructions help, but they are not a substitute for ROPS.

## RESOURCES:

- Consumer Products Safety Commission  
[www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)
- National AG Safety Database  
[www.cdc.gov/nasd](http://www.cdc.gov/nasd)
- National Safety Council  
[www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)
- Occupational Safety & Health Admin  
[www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)

## CONSUMER SAFETY & JUSTICE -

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# SAFETY JUSTICE

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# RIDING MOWER & LAWN TRACTOR SAFETY

*What you need to know.*



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Edward M. Ricci, P.A.*

## HOW IMPORTANT IS LAWN TRACTOR / RIDING MOWER SAFETY?

Riding mower operators (landscapers and homeowners) across America are dying needlessly at condominium developments, golf courses, parks and behind private homes.

According to a June 2004 report by the National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH), rollovers claim at least 130 lives a year and account for the majority of lawn tractor related fatalities. This number is potentially higher because some incidents go unreported. Thousands of others are seriously injured. The risk cuts across all brands and models regardless of the manufacturer.

## ACCIDENTS – FORESEEABLE & PREVENTABLE



The NIOSH has also determined that use of Roll-Over Protection Structures (ROPS) are estimated to be 99 percent effective in preventing death or serious injury in an overturn.

Manufacturers have known this for more than 30 years, but the industry is unresponsive and slow to self-regulate the safety of their products agreeing to only the bare minimum safety standards.

## WATER DROWNINGS

When these tractors rollover into water (canals, lakes and ponds) – it is virtually impossible to save the life of the operator without ROPS – even as shallow as two and a half feet – the operator is often crushed by the weight of the tractor or is pinned and unable to escape.

## SAMPLING OF LAWN TRACTOR / RIDING MOWER BRANDS

Ariens	Bob-Cat	Craftsman	Dixie Chopper
Dixon	DR	Encore	Grasshopper
Husqvarna	John Deere	Kubota	Massey Ferguson
New Holland	Snapper	Toro	Troy-bilt
Yard Shark	Woods	World Lawn	Wright

## UNEVEN SURFACES

Many rollovers occur when an operator angles the mower across a slope or embankment, instead of moving in the same direction as the incline. When used on a ditch banks or inclines, a riding mower can cause serious injury or death if it rolls over and pins or crushes the operator beneath its weight.

## FIRST THINGS FIRST

It is very important that you understand how to safely use a riding mower / lawn tractor. Knowing the appropriate safety features could save your life.



## CREATING A SAFE ZONE

Roll-Over Protective Structures consist of either a cab or frame (bars) that provide a safe zone for the tractor operator in a rollover. ROPS must meet standards set forth by the OSHA for agricultural tractors (CFR 1928.51(a)) or industrial tractors (CFR 1926.1002(j)(2)).

## MOST AT RISK

Zero-Turn-Radius riding lawn mowers / tractors, often used exclusively for commercial lawn maintenance in condominium developments, golf courses, parks and behind private homes, are the most susceptible to rollovers. They are also fast becoming the machine of choice in residential lawn care.

The National Safety Council has a training program to instruct commercial lawn care equipment operators on the safe operation of zero radius turn (ZRT) mowers. To learn about the Commercial Equipment Operators' (CEO) Safety Training program visit: [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org).

## RETROFITTING & PURCHASING

The NOISH study also reveals that of the **4.8 million tractors in the U.S., more than half are not retrofitted.** Numerous manufacturers have done little to recall the units already in the hands of customers to be retrofitted with ROPS at company cost. If your machine is not equipped with ROPS, contact your retailer or manufacturer about a retrofit. The one time effort of installing ROPS on a mower or tractor will protect all operators of the tractor for the life of the tractor. Your home improvement store, tractor sales store or the manufacturer should be able to tell you what safety features certain tractors have and how and where to retrofit your mower. If purchasing a new mower / tractor make sure it has the latest safety features including ROPS.