

## DuPage County Environmental, Safety, Health & Property Loss Control Program

### Pressure Washer Safety

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**Background:** Pressure washers are used to clean large areas, including buildings, parking lots, vehicles and machinery. These high-powered tools also are used in disaster cleanup. But according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a pressure washer's intense spray can cause wounds and other serious injuries that may at first appear minor. This may result in an injured person delaying treatment – putting himself or herself at increased risk for infection, disability or amputation.

#### **Policy:**

- Anyone who suffers pressure washer-related wound should seek medical attention right away.
- Never point a pressure washer at yourself or other people.
- Test the ground fault circuit interrupter before use.
- To help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, do not use a gas-powered system indoors or in enclosed, unventilated spaces.
- If you must use an extension cord, keep the washer's power cord connection out of standing water. Use a cord rated for use in wet environments.
- Don't cut or splice the washer's power cord or extension cord(s).
- If the washer trips a circuit breaker, stop use and have the machine inspected by an electrician.
- Cover fire alarm pull boxes on wall to be cleaned with plastic.
- Do not aim spray at or near ceiling mounted fire detectors.
- Keep control of water stream use both hands on spray wand.

#### **Personal Protective Equipment Required:**

- Slip resistant shoes or boots
- Full Face Mask
- Long pants and shirt sleeves

#### **Personal Protective Equipment Recommended:**

- Hearing protection
- Water proof apron to cover clothing