Avoid mowing with a regular unit on slopes that rise or fall away more than 1 foot in 2.5 feet of horizontal distance. Use a side-mounted mower or a boom, and keep the tractor unit on the gently sloped surface.

Operate side-mounted or boom mower units on the uphill side of the tractor, where possible, to further diminish the possibility of overturning the tractor.

Before starting any mower, check the chain guard and other mower covers intended to keep debris from being thrown. Replace broken or missing debris guards immediately; don’t operate a mower without them. A small rock or piece of a can or bottle becomes a dangerous projectile when launched by a mower. Cover all v-belts, drive chains, and power take-off shafts.

Raise mowers when crossing driveways and roadways.

Shut off power before checking any mower unit. Block the mower before changing or sharpening a blade. Any blade being reinstalled should be checked for cracks or damage that will lead to failure.

Place a “Slow Moving Vehicle” sign (reflective triangle) on the rear of tractors. Use rotating yellow beacons on the tractors, and install yellow flashers on the roll bar or top of the tractor cab. Operate these at all times. Install an orange pennant on a whip to show the location of the tractor over the edge of slopes. Use the tractor’s headlights at all times.

Face oncoming traffic as much as possible when mowing around hazard markers, signs, and guardrail near the edge of the roadway to watch out for out-of-control vehicles.

Wear hearing protection and a safety vest. Wear a hard hat and safety goggles to protect yourself from branches and flying debris. Wear leather gloves and boots that have hard toes and soles.
Additional Information for Presenters
Review the information provided on the reverse side of this safety tip sheet. Please refrain from reading the information verbatim—paraphrase it instead.

**FHWA Standards That May Apply:**
MUTCD Part VI: Standards and Guides for Traffic Controls for Street and Highway Construction, Maintenance, Utility, and Incident Management Operations

**Link:**
Federal Highway Administration
mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov

**Source:**
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