



NEWS

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Contact: Dan Harris, Marketing Manager
1825 Greenleaf Avenue
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
Ph (847) 348-1589

Use your pressure washer to clean your mower and snowblower!

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As the leaves on the trees begin to change color and herald the coming of autumn, many homeowners find this is the best time to clean their mower before putting it away for the winter.

Final Fall Cleaning

After you complete the last mowing for the season, these quick steps will ensure your mower will be ready for you in the Spring, without most of the headaches you might experience. Go to your local hardware store or home improvement store and locate the lawn mower section. A bottle of oil, a new air filter, spark plug, and maybe a new blade will be just the thing to bring your mower back to life!

Power Wash the Deck, Top and Bottom!

First, get out your pressure washer and clean the top of your lawn mower deck. Leaves, grass, and dirt tend to accumulate, and these things can help retain moisture and encourage rust to start impacting your deck and handles. Once you finish the top, do a quick cleaning of the wheels. Next, lay your mower over on the side, allowing you to completely clean the bottom of the deck. Make sure to get the clumps of grass and dirt out from under there, checking the small areas where it seems to get packed in very tight. Again, moisture can be trapped by dirt and grass, and this can shorten the life of your mower with rust. While you are doing this you can take a look at the lawnmower blade, and see if it can be sharpened or needs replacing. Most local hardware stores have the ability to sharpen the blade for you, and will advise you if it is simply “too far gone”. A sharp blade cuts better, mulches the grass, and helps the grass grow stronger (instead of tearing the top off, leaving a jagged edge).

While the mower is tipped on the side, you will likely be draining the gas tank. Some manufacturers suggest draining the tank dry when placing the mower in storage, others suggest using fuel stabilizer and keeping the tank full. Check your owners manual for the right method for your mower.

Remove the Spark Plug

Most mowers only have one, making this a really easy task! Remove your spark plug, but keep it nearby. There are usually codes written on them, making it easier to find the replacement at the hardware store. Your best bet is to bring it, along with your blade, to your local hardware store. When you get home, set the spark plug gap to be the same as the one you removed. Don't



replace the spark plug right away – since we will be working around the blade, we should leave it out, for safety.

Replace the Oil

Just like your car, your lawn mower engine uses oil. Most lawn mower engines need the oil replaced (at least) once a season. If you haven't done it before, now is a great time to do it. Your owner's manual probably has the details, but most of the time it is just as easy to get a wide-mouth container and drain the oil out of the mower, and then pour in new oil.

Replace the Air Filter

Locate your air filter – most of the time there is a wingnut holding the assembly together, making this one of the easiest parts to replace. Pull out the old one, insert the new one, and screw it all back together!

The Blade

If you have experience, you can sharpen the blade yourself, or you can let the professionals handle it for you! Most local hardware stores can sharpen the blade, or advise you if it needs replacement. So bring it with when you go to get the new spark plug, air filter, and engine oil. Once you re-install the blade, then it is ok to re-install the spark plug, and re-attach the spark plug wire.

These steps can be completed in less than an hour, and will definitely help your mower be ready for next year! While you put the mower in storage, pull out the snow blower, and give it a quick cleaning (since you have your pressure washer out, and ready to go!).

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For more complete information, please contact Dan Harris, Marketing Manager at FNA Group, 1825 Greenleaf Ave, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007. Phone (847) 348-1589, or send email to dharris@fna-group.com