



Landscape Services

Safety Standard Operating Procedure

(Revised 6/2023)

Native Corridor

Cutback of Ornamental Grasses

This SSOP provides guidance on the safe cutback of ornamental grasses used in the Native Corridor. As with any equipment or tools, the most basic premise for safe operation is reading and adhering to the manufacturer's instructions and warnings. This SSOP is not a substitute for the owner's manual produced by the manufacturer.

Safety

PPE Required for Ornamental Grass Cutbacks: Gloves, sturdy footwear, eye protection, hedge trimmer chaps, hearing protection (if not battery operated equipment being used)

Scheduled: Late February or early March

Tools Needed: Hedge trimmers, tarp, rake, pitch fork, twine/rope and blower

Safety Hazards: Vehicle and pedestrian traffic, lifting, bending, noise, equipment malfunction, hot or cold temperatures, sharp objects and inclement weather.

Preparation to Cutback Ornamental Grasses

1. Prior to cutting back grasses, assess if any of the grasses should be split.
 - a. It is important to note this so that these grasses do not develop crown rot and die from the center.
2. Leaves are left around the base of plants in the Native Corridor ONLY.
3. One week prior to the scheduled cutback of the ornamental grasses, remove all leaves at the base of the grasses and dispose of at composting.

Cutback of Ornamental Grasses

This method is for a team of two cutting back grasses

1. Team member number one should bundle the grass up with a rope.
 - a. Wrap the rope around the base of the grass.
 - b. One end of the rope should have a loop, pull the non looped end through the loop
 - c. Move the rope roughly halfway up the grass and tighten the rope.
 - d. Hold the rope tight between thumb and forefinger to keep the rope from loosening during cutting
2. Team member number two will cut the grass roughly eight to twelve inches from ground.

- a. **When cutting with the hedge trimmers, always cut away from the person holding the rope tying the grass up.**
3. Once the grass has been cut through by team member two, team member one will take the cut grass to the tarp for onsite disposal.
4. Load up the filled tarp in the utility vehicle or truck.
5. Repeat steps 1 - 4 until all grasses have been cutback.
6. Once all grasses have been cutback, review the beds and rake clean where needed.
7. Blow off all hardscapes
8. Dispose of materials at compost or central disposal hub designated within campus.

This method is for a one man team to cut back grasses

1. Grab your hedge trimmers and begin to cut the grass just below halfway on the grass.
 - a. **Be sure to cut away from you and not towards your body.**
 - b. **Keep an eye out for people walking by before you make your cuts.**
2. After the grass has been cut once, cut the grass that is left standing down to roughly eight to twelve inches above the ground.
3. Cut only as many grasses as you can fit into one tarp load.
4. Once you have cut enough grasses to fill the tarp to be hauled off, rake clippings into piles.
5. Pick up each pile and place it on the tarp for removal.
6. Load up the filled tarp in the utility vehicle or truck.
7. Repeat steps 1-6 until all grasses have been cutback.
8. Once all grasses have been cutback, review the beds and rake where needed.
9. Blow off all hardscapes
10. Dispose of materials at compost or central disposal hub designated within campus.