

Get Off the Grass!

As a parcel delivery driver, you face a variety of personal injury hazards that include motor vehicle accidents, strains from handling cumbersome packages, and dog bites, just to name a few. Despite all of those hazards, it is slips, trips, and falls that account for an alarming number of injuries to parcel delivery drivers. So, what contributes to so many slips, trips, and falls? Cutting through the grass is one very significant hazard for parcel delivery drivers. You might be thinking, “Grass? I need to avoid grass?” Unfortunately, yes. Believe it or not, simply walking through the grass is a significant hazard and should be avoided.

WET GRASS

All grass should be considered a potential hazard. However wet grass can be especially hazardous. Depending on whether a lawn application was recently applied, or if your footwear has inadequate tread, or if there is an oily residue on the sole of your shoe, grass (especially wet grass) can be very slippery. This is why athletes wear cleats. Grass can become wet after in the early morning or evening hours in the form of dew, from a rain shower, after someone has watered their lawn, as overspray from a homeowner washing a car, and countless other things.

LAWN CLIPPINGS

Grass clippings can also be slippery, whether they are on the lawn, on the sidewalk, or blown into the street. On surfaces like sidewalks and streets, lawn clippings stick to oily substances, and when they do, they can hide those slick surfaces. If you walk across them, you could very easily slip and fall. For that reason alone, it is a good idea to not only stay off lawns but also walk around grass that is laying on the sidewalk or street.

HOLES, RUTS, ROOT AND OTHER HAZARDS

Relative deep holes, ruts, roots, or other hazards (such as a golf ball in the grass) can be difficult to see and can not only lead to a trip and fall but can cause you to stumble and twist your ankle. Face it, it’s just not practical to think that you are going to look and the ground and focus on each step, all the way to the customer’s door and back to your van again. So, avoid the grass and you will avoid a variety of hazards that might be hiding among those blades of grass.

ANIMAL FECES

Ok, animal feces is a pleasant topic, but it’s a topic we can’t avoid when talking about walking through the grass. You rarely see someone’s pet doing their business in the middle of a parking lot. They do their business in the grass. Unfortunately, everyone does not pick up their pet’s animal feces (particularly in their own yard), so animal feces should be anticipated in any grassy area. Not only is stepping in animal feces disgusting, but it can also cause you to slip and fall. So, stay out of the grass and you will likely avoid a very unpleasant and potentially hazardous situation.

COMMON INJURIES

Wet grass, lawn clippings, hidden holes, trip hazards, and objects like golf balls and animal feces that you just don’t see until it’s too late should be enough to keep you out of the grass. But perhaps you need a little more encouragement. Although many times you might stumble or even fall and not hurt anything more than your pride. Everyday parcel delivery contractors suffer knee injuries when they twist wrong or land on their knees when they fall. They suffer a sprained or broken ankle from stepping in holes or on objects that are hidden in the grass, and they suffer lacerations when their outstretched hand or their head hits against the sidewalk that they should have been using anyhow.

INJURY PREVENTION

Certainly, you want to perform your job as expediently as possible and cutting through the grass may seem like a good idea. It is not! Avoid walking through the grass and avoid lawn clippings that are on the sidewalk or road and you will never notice the time that it adds to your route, but you will notice that you are far safer.