

# LAWN & GARDEN

## Lawnmower maintenance and fast facts

With the arrival of spring, the start of lawn care season is set to begin. Whether you mow the lawn yourself with your gas, electric or hybrid mower, or hire the local neighbour's son or daughter to take on this annual chore, be sure to give your mower a tune-up before starting the engine. Remember, your lawnmower has been sitting idle for months, and may be in need of some TLC before taking on the task of cutting. Consider these lawnmower maintenance tips:

**Spark Plug:** Before performing any lawnmower maintenance, disconnect the sparkplug. To change a sparkplug, loosen it with a plug wrench. If the plug isn't corroded or damaged, you may be able to clean and reuse it - but it is always good custom to replace the old plug. A new plug will help keep your mower running smoothly.

**Air Filter:** One of the most common sources of lawnmower problems is the air filter. To change the filter, remove the cover and pull the filter out. Shake or blow out any debris from the filter. If the old filter is noticeably dirty you should consider replacing it with a new one.

**Wheels:** Keep your wheels in good working order by lubricating them with automotive grease. Use a ratchet and socket to remove the wheel and be sure to smear some automotive grease on the axle before putting the wheel back in place.

**Blade:** A sharp blade makes mowing effective and easy. Check your mowers blades periodically for nicks and dents. If the blade

becomes dull you can sharpen it yourself with a little careful handling. Use a block of wood to help hold the blade still. Wear leather gloves and hold the blade in place while spraying the nut with some penetrating lubricant. Then use a ratchet to turn the retaining nut counterclockwise. Once you have the blade in hand, put on your safety glasses and sharpen it with a file or a metal grinder.

**Cable Check:** Give your cables a check to make sure that they're in good shape. You may want to lubricate them with dry graphite to help keep them from wearing out.

- News Canada



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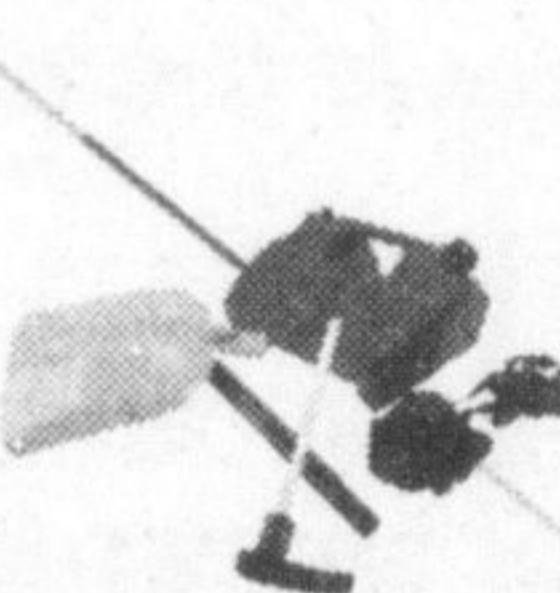
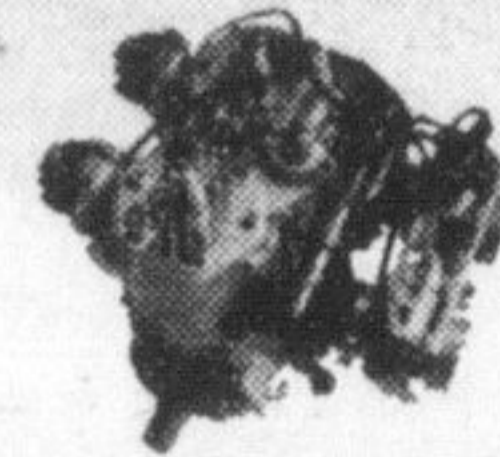
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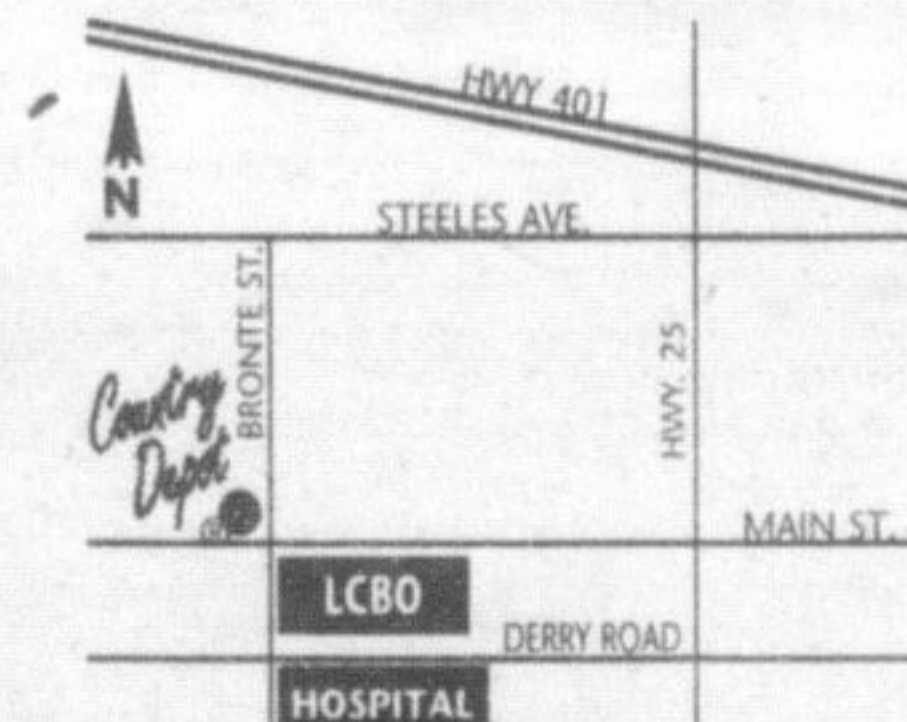
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