House Safety Key

with Using Post Hole Diggers

Preparation

- Contact the local utility companies for the location of cables and pipes before digging.
- Select equipment that is suitable for the tasks required - consider the type of soil (full of rocks and roots?), the depth and diameter of the holes, accessibility to the site, etc.
- Before operating the equipment, read, understand and follow the manufacturer's operating manual and safety decals on the equipment.
- Check that you are using the correct shear bolt (for hardness and length) that is specified by the equipment manufacturer to ensure that the shear bolt breaks when required and to prevent clothing from getting entangled with a shear bolt that is too long.
- Ensure that the auger point and cutting edges are in good condition and that the equipment is in good working order.

Hand-Held Post Hole Diggers

- If you are using a one- or two-person hand-held unit, position yourself so that you do not get hit by the handle if the auger stops abruptly.
- Operate the auger at slow speeds.
- Dig the hole in several steps by clearing the soil frequently. Removing the soil reduces the load on the digger and allows for better control.
- Shut off the drive and stop the power source if the auger jams. Turn the auger backwards until clear.
- Keep loose shirts, coats, boot laces and long hair which may get caught clear of the auger.
- Turn off the power before cleaning out twigs or grass.
- Do not lock the drive control in an "on" position.

Tractor-Mounted Post Hole Diggers

- If you are using a post hole digger mounted on the back of a tractor, operate it while sitting in the tractor seat.
- Ensure that no one is in contact with or near the post hole digger, auger or PTO (power take off) drive train before operating the equipment.
- Ensure that all machine guarding and shields are in place before digging.