Safe Work Method Statement

Lawn mowing and garden maintenance

Business	Mowbuddy Pty Ltd, trading as Mowbuddy
ABN	37 628 658 417
Address	13 Newstead Street, Keysborough VIC 3173
Phone and email	03 9100 3636, team@mowbuddy.com.au
Work activity	Lawn mowing, edging, whipper snipping, blowing, weeding and weed spraying, hedge trimming, green waste removal and light garden maintenance at residential, rental, strata and common property sites
Work performed by	A Mowbuddy gardener: an independent contractor who holds their own public liability insurance
SWMS version	1.1, issued 1 October 2026
Review date	October 2027, or sooner after any incident or change in work method

1. Purpose

This Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) sets out how Mowbuddy gardeners carry out lawn mowing and garden maintenance safely. It names the main hazards of the work and the controls used to manage them.

It is written to meet the work health and safety laws in each state and territory where we work, including the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Regulations as adopted in NSW, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and the ACT, the Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA) and the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic).

Every Mowbuddy gardener must read this SWMS, follow it on every job, and sign the acknowledgement at the end of this SWMS before starting work. A copy is available to clients, owners corporations and strata managers on request or at mowbuddy.com.au/swms.

2. Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Worn on every job:

- Safety glasses or a face shield (AS/NZS 1337)
- Hearing protection (earmuffs or plugs) when using powered equipment
- Enclosed, non slip work boots, steel capped preferred
- Long pants or leg protection when whipper snipping
- Gloves when handling green waste, fuel, chemicals or blades
- Sun protection: broad brim hat, long sleeve shirt and SPF 50+ sunscreen
- Hi vis vest or shirt when working near roads, driveways or car parks

3. Plant and equipment

- Push mowers and ride on mowers
- Line trimmer (whipper snipper) and edger
- Leaf blower
- Hedge trimmer and hand tools for light garden work
- Knapsack or hand sprayer for weed control (when included in the job)
- Fuel containers (approved type, clearly labelled)
- Vehicle and trailer with ramps
- First aid kit, fire extinguisher and drinking water

All equipment is checked before use: guards fitted, blades secure and sharp, no fuel leaks and the stop switch working. Faulty equipment is tagged out and not used until it is repaired.

4. Work steps, hazards and controls

Risk rating: H is high, M is medium, L is low. The rating before controls is shown first, then the rating after controls.

Work step	Hazards	Risk before	Controls	Risk after
1. Arrival and parking	Traffic, reversing vehicle and trailer, blocking driveways and car parks	**M**	Park legally and off the road where possible; use hazard lights while loading; check around the vehicle before reversing; wear hi vis near roads and in car parks	**L**
2. Site access	Locked gates, dogs and other pets, residents not expecting the visit	**M**	Follow the access instructions in the work order; confirm pets are secured before entering; knock and announce arrival at private yards; do not enter if an animal is loose or the resident asks you not to; tell Mowbuddy and the client about any access problem	**L**
3. Site inspection before starting	Hidden objects (rocks, sticks, toys, hoses, dog waste, glass, syringes), holes, sprinkler heads, garden edges, snakes and spiders	**H**	Walk the whole area first; remove loose objects; mark or avoid fixed hazards; never pick up syringes or sharps by hand (use tongs and a sharps container, or report them to the client); stop work and move away if a snake is seen	**L**
4. Refuelling	Fuel spills, fire, burns, breathing in fumes	**M**	Refuel outdoors with the engine off and cool; no smoking or ignition sources nearby; use an approved container and spout; wipe up spills straight away; carry a fire extinguisher in the vehicle	**L**
5. Mowing	Thrown objects, contact with blades, loss of control on slopes, noise, vibration, crush injury from a ride on mower	**H**	Keep guards and catchers fitted; never put hands or feet near the deck while it is running; stop the engine and disconnect the spark plug lead before clearing a blockage; mow across slopes with a push mower and up and down slopes with a ride on; do not mow slopes that are too steep or wet; keep children, residents and pets well clear and stop if anyone comes near; wear PPE; take regular breaks to reduce vibration	**L**
6. Whipper snipping and edging	Thrown debris hitting people, windows, cars or the operator; noise; contact with the line or blade	**H**	Wear eye, ear and leg protection; check for people nearby before starting; use a debris shield or work away from windows, cars and glass doors; slow down near hard surfaces and buildings; stop when anyone approaches	**L**
7. Blowing	Dust and debris in eyes, debris blown onto people, cars or neighbouring property, noise	**M**	Wear eye and ear protection; blow away from people, open windows, doors and cars; use the lowest setting that does the job; follow local council noise hours	**L**
8. Weeding and weed spraying	Skin and eye contact with chemicals, breathing in spray, spray drift onto people, pets, plants or waterways	**M**	Use only registered products at the rate on the label and read the safety data sheet first; wear gloves and eye protection; do not spray in wind or before rain; keep people and pets off sprayed areas until dry; keep chemicals locked and labelled in the vehicle; hold a chemical use licence where state law needs one	**L**
9. Hedge trimming and light garden work	Cuts from hedge trimmers and hand tools, working from steps, thorns and plant irritation	**M**	Use two handed operation on hedge trimmers; keep hand tools sharp and in good condition; use a stable platform and do not overreach; no work from ladders above 2 m; wear gloves and long sleeves	**L**
10. Manual handling	Back injury from lifting mowers, green waste bags and bins	**M**	Use ramps to load mowers; lift with bent knees and a straight back; do not overfill bags; get help or split loads that are too heavy	**L**

Work step	Hazards	Risk before	Controls	Risk after
11. Heat, sun and weather	Heat stress, dehydration, sunburn, lightning, slipping on wet grass	**M**	Carry and drink plenty of water; take shade breaks; reschedule in extreme heat; stop work during storms and lightning; do not mow wet slopes	**L**
12. Underground and overhead services	Damaging irrigation, cables or pipes; contact with overhead power lines	**M**	Look for sprinkler heads, pits and service markers during the inspection; do not dig without a Before You Dig check; keep tools and trimmed branches well clear of overhead power lines	**L**
13. Green waste removal	Overloaded trailer, loose loads, dumping in the wrong place	**M**	Do not exceed trailer limits; secure loads with a net or tarp; dispose of green waste only at licensed facilities, in the site's green bins, or as agreed with the client	**L**
14. Finishing the job	Gates left open (pets escaping), keys not returned, damage not reported	**M**	Close and latch all gates; return keys the same day; photograph the completed work; report any damage, defects or safety concerns to Mowbuddy and the client	**L**

5. Protecting residents, the public and property

- Keep people and pets well clear of running equipment, and stop work if anyone comes within range
- Never leave running equipment unattended
- Respect residents' privacy and stay within the area in the work order
- Take care to protect windows, cars, fences, garden beds and irrigation
- Report any damage straight away to Mowbuddy and the client

6. Emergency procedures

Serious injury or fire	Call 000 first, then call Mowbuddy on 03 9100 3636
First aid	A stocked first aid kit is carried in every vehicle
Snake bite	Keep still, call 000 and apply a pressure immobilisation bandage
Fuel or chemical spill	Stop the source, contain it with absorbent material and keep ignition sources away
Incidents and near misses	Report to Mowbuddy and the client on the same day

7. Training and competency

Mowbuddy gardeners must be competent in the safe use of all equipment they operate, understand this SWMS, and keep their own public liability insurance current. Mowbuddy checks insurance when a gardener joins and may ask for proof at any time.

8. Review

This SWMS is reviewed every 12 months, after any incident, or when the work method changes. Next review: October 2027, or sooner after any incident or change in work method.

9. Acknowledgement

I have read and understood this Safe Work Method Statement and will follow it when carrying out work.

Mowbuddy gardener name	Business name	Signature	Date

Approved by Mowbuddy

Name	Position	Date
Jim Drivas	Co-founder, Mowbuddy Pty Ltd	1 October 2026