

Trail Stewardship Techniques

2026 Annual Monitoring Program



General Trail Maintenance

- Remove debris from trail if possible
 - Ex. Small branches and logs
- Widen overgrown trails by removing vegetation protruding onto path
- Note condition of kiosks and signage
 - If possible, remove vegetation obstructing view of signs/kiosks
- Report any of the following to T3C staff:
 - Dumping/encroachment
 - Dangerous materials on trails
 - Graffiti/vandalism
 - Evidence of off-road vehicle use
 - Maintenance needed on structures such as kiosks, benches, and stairs

Vegetation Management

- Widen overgrown trails to maintain a width of 4 feet and a height of 8 feet
- Look for the following:



Low Hanging Branches



Vegetation Obstructing Signs



Dense vegetation growing onto trail

Proper Cutting Techniques

- **Ground Vegetation (i.e. shrubs, saplings, forbs):** Cut as close (flush) to the ground as possible to avoid protruding stumps that could create a tripping hazard.
- **Small Tree Branches:** Cut as flush with the trunk or connected branch as possible.
- **Larger Tree Branches:** Cut just below the collar (thickest part of branch where it meets the trunk)
- When cutting thicker/larger branches, make sure that the cut surface is smooth rather than jagged or pointed.
- Always move cut vegetation off the path (you can throw it off trail)

Collar (thick notch at the end of branch)



Cut right below the collar

Use loppers for thinner branches

Use hand saws for thicker branches

Properly cut



Smooth, flat cut edge

Cut as close the ground as possible

Unproperly cut



Jagged cut edges

Not cut flesh with the ground

What You Are Not Permitted to Do

- **Never** perform any work such as cutting new trails, placing signs, and removing vegetation on town-owned properties without prior approval from the town.
- **Never** perform any maintenance within 100 feet of a wetland.



Tool Use

➤ You can use the following tools for clearing trails

➤ **Hand Tools:**

- Pruning Shears: For small twigs and vines
- Loppers: For thin branches and vines
- Hand Saws: For thicker branches

➤ **Power Tools:**

- Brush Cutter: Best for removing dense swathes of small to medium-sized woody vegetation
- String Trimmers (Weed Whackers): Best for cutting back grasses
- Hedge Trimmer: Best for trimming dense vegetation growing higher off the ground
- Chainsaw: For removing and cutting up medium to large trees
- Leaf Blower: For removing cut brush and leaves from a work site after cutting

Tool Safety Techniques

- Please always wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when using tools.
 - Hand tools: durable gloves
 - Power tools: chaps, eye protection, ear protection, gloves, helmet or hard hat
- Power tools, especially chain saws, require prior training and experience for use.
- Never
 - Use a tool without the appropriate knowledge and experience
 - Walk long distances or run while power tools are turned on
 - Force your loppers to cut anything that is too thick
- Only use tools for their intended purpose and never point the sharp end of a tool at yourself or someone else.
- Keep tools in good condition!

Hand Tools



Pruning Shears



Loppers



Hand Saws

Power Tools



Hedge Trimmer



Leaf Blower



Chainsaw



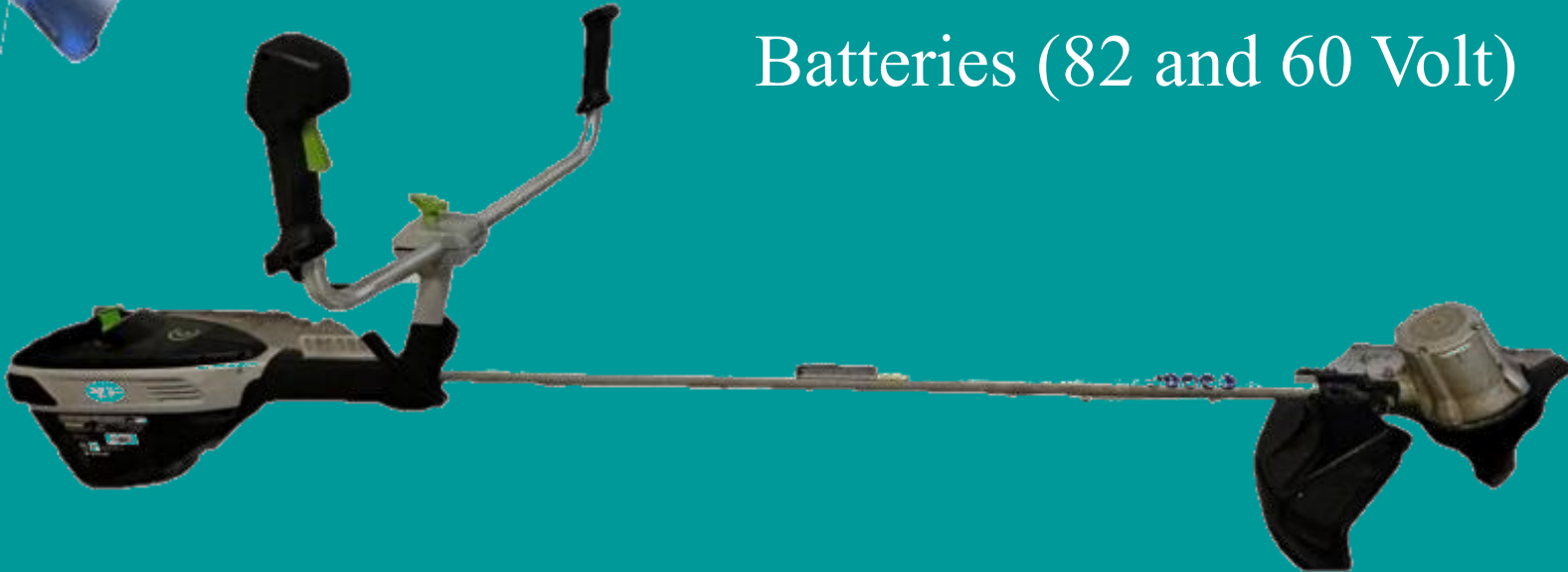
Harness



Batteries (82 and 60 Volt)



Chaps and Helmet



Brush Cutter



String Trimmer

Power Tool Batteries

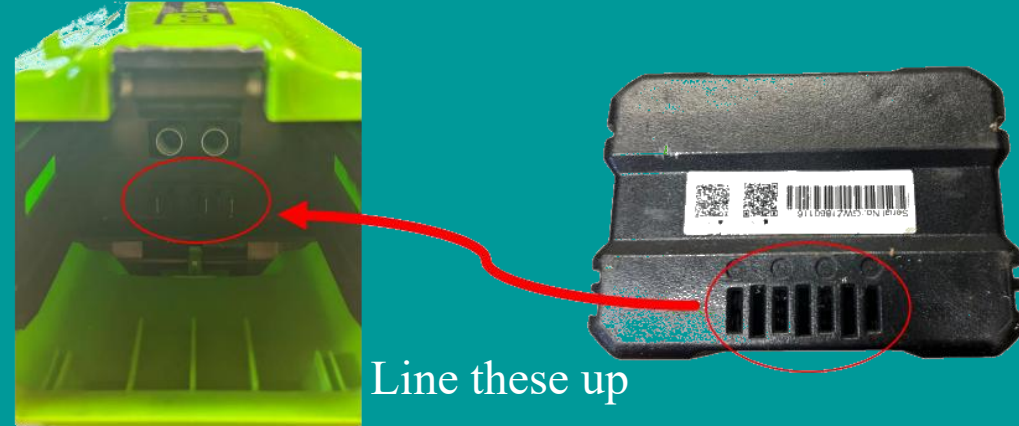
➤ Most of T3C's power tools are battery-operated.

➤ Most take 82 Volt batteries, but some take 60 Volt.

➤ Pay attention to what type of batteries the tool takes and never try to force the incorrect battery type into the cartridge!

➤ Keep the batteries charged and hook up them to the charging ports after use.

➤ When placing batteries inside of a tool, make sure you line up the lines on the bottom of the battery with the prongs inside of the tool's cartridge.



General Outdoor Safety

- Wear appropriate clothing for hiking, including long pants and close-toed shoes to avoid ticks, mosquitos, and sun burns
- Try to stay on marked trails
- Have a map and your phone with you
- Avoid going out in bad weather
- Go out with a buddy if possible
- Watch out for poison ivy and plants with thorns



If it has leaves of three, let it be!

Thank you!
For Stewarding Our Lands

Stewardship Manual 2021