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## **AG SAFETY S.T.A.T. – SAFE TACTICS FOR AG TODAY**

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### **THOUGHTS from the EDITOR - GREAT GIVING IDEAS**

#### **Dee Jepsen, State Safety Leader**

This is the season that we reflect on our bounties and reach out to others less fortunate. If you happen to need a good reason to show your family, friends, or employees how much you value them, why not give them the gift of safety? Some of my favorite gift giving ideas include: new boots, work gloves, ear plugs, and ATV or snow mobile helmets. Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors are thoughtful gifts for anyone, as our first aid kits and emergency kits for vehicles. For those extravagant gift givers, a ROPS for an older model tractor is just the ticket - and working with the dealer, you'll discover that one size may not fit all, but most models have retrofits available.

And if you are fortunate enough to find a new pony or ATV under the tree, then hopefully there is an accompanying helmet and other safety gear with it. This is also a good message for those getting shiny new bicycles and skateboards. It's tempting to ride these items immediately - there should be no delay in having the proper gear available to make that first ride a safe one.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday!

### **ANNOUNCING the OHIO AGRABILITY PROJECT**

A newly funded federal Extension program is in Ohio! The Ohio AgrAbility Program has a mission to promote independence through rehabilitation and establish service capacity to meet the needs of farm families with chronic and disabling injuries. The program is a collaborative effort between OSUE and Easter Seals. The partnership combines resources, knowledge, and outreach to bridge agricultural clientele to the disability services and appropriate technologies.

Kent McGuire will be managing the Ohio AgrAbility Program. Kent is from Wyandot County, where he has been a part of a farm operation and lived in a farm community all of his life. Kent will be attending the OSU Extension Annual Conference and would be glad to schedule a time to come to your county and provide AgrAbility education training to your staff or your local agricultural / civic groups. For further information about the Ohio AgrAbility Program, feel free to contact Kent McGuire at 614-292-0588 or [m McGuire.225@osu.edu](mailto:m McGuire.225@osu.edu).

### **FARM SAFETY DAY CAMPS**

We are currently seeking counties to host a Farm Safety Round-Up in 2010. These day camps provide youth an opportunity to learn about agricultural hazards and injury prevention. The mission of the day camp program is to teach youth about rural dangers; however the campers do not have to be farm children to benefit from the educational sessions. Injuries from horses, livestock, ponds, lawn mowers and electricity can occur to anyone, not just farm kids. Campers learn in a fun, interactive way the consequences of poor judgment around power machinery, flowing grain, and livestock. To date, approximately 16,100 youth have enrolled in this statewide event over the past 12 years!

Farm Safety Round-Ups are cooperative partnerships between Ohio State University Extension, Ohio Farm Bureau, Our Ohio, Nationwide Insurance Enterprise and the Ohio 4-H Foundation. These programs serve as ideal conduits

between businesses and community organizations interested in the health and safety of local youth. Many agencies use the Round-Up program to benefit their own outreach education efforts. For example, local electric co-ops have dynamic electric safety presentations, the YMCA has excellent water safety/water rescue programs, and health departments have a variety of health programs targeting younger audiences.

For more information about hosting a day camp, including the benefits and goodies sponsored at the state level, please contact Kathy Henwood, OSUE Agricultural Safety & Health Program Assistant, at [henwood.13@osu.edu](mailto:henwood.13@osu.edu) or 614-292-0622.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TIP of the MONTH - Protection Against the Silent Killer**

### **Aletha I. Reshan, Emergency Management Planning and Education Program Coordinator**

Now that cold weather has arrived so too has the need for home heating and protection against the "silent killer," carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is called the silent killer because it is a tasteless, colorless, and odorless gas. It is produced by motor vehicles; small gas engines such as lawn mowers, snow blowers, and generators; home heating systems and devices to include natural gas furnaces, wood burners, fireplaces, and kerosene heaters; as well as gas cooking stoves and lanterns.

The threat of carbon monoxide poisoning occurs during cold weather with ventilation being reduced to help retain the warmth from heat sources and heat sources either not being used properly or not being in proper working order. The best prevention against carbon monoxide poisoning is the installation of carbon monoxide detectors that sound an alarm when the gas is present. It is best to install a detector on each level of the home.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, confusion, and chest pain. Since these symptoms are similar to those of other ailments, carbon monoxide poisoning can sometimes be difficult to recognize. However, if multiple individuals in the same home become ill with the same symptoms when heat sources are operating that is a very good indicator of carbon monoxide poisoning. Left untreated, the result can be unconsciousness, coma, or death. If you suspect carbon monoxide poisoning, go outside immediately and call 911! If others are not able to exit the dwelling, open doors and windows to help the gas escape while awaiting assistance from emergency responders.

To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning, have home heating systems inspected and serviced annually as part of your home maintenance efforts this includes the chimney. When operating a fireplace ensure the flue is open. Keep appliances in good working order and do not use a gas oven as a heat source. Do not operate a generator in a confined space, it must always be operated in a well-ventilated, outdoor area. Do not sleep in a room with a non-vented gas or kerosene heater. And never leave a car or generator running in an attached garage - even with the door open.

Annually, 500 Americans die due to not adhering to these simple prevention steps - do not let your or your loved ones be a victim of the "silent killer"! For more information on carbon monoxide poisoning and prevention, please visit <http://www.weathersafety.ohio.gov/CarbonMonoxideSafety.aspx>.

## **HOLIDAY SAFETY**

### **Tim Butcher, OSHA Program Coordinator**

The holiday season has arrived and people are eager to decorate their homes. Unfortunately accidents do not take time off. According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, approximately 12,500 people each year visit a hospital emergency room for burns, falls, cuts, and shocks related to holiday decorating. Many of the accidents involve lighting, but the following recommendations can help reduce the danger.

- Holiday lighting should be checked before use, even if new, for broken wires or loose connections. These wires are often subjected to temperature and moisture extremes in use and storage and are also commonly stretched and flexed.

- Some lights are designed for indoor or outdoor use. Others can only be used indoors. Check labels to be sure which ones are being used and that they have a genuine Underwriters Laboratory inspection. Do not use nails or staples to hold lights in place, use ties or hooks.
- Outdoor electrical decorations should be plugged into outlets equipped with ground fault circuit interruption. Do not run extension cords where they will be subjected to excessive wear, such as through doorways or windows.
- Lights should be turned off in the evening or when the occupants are away from the home. Besides saving energy, lights should only be used when someone is able to respond to problems.

A significant number of the accidents that occur during the holidays are fires. According to the National Fire Protection Association, between 2003-2007, U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 250 home fires each year that started with Christmas trees. Annually these fires caused an average of 14 deaths, 26 injuries, and \$13.8 million in direct property damage. Consider the following suggestions to avoid Christmas tree fires.

- If using an artificial tree look to see if it is fire resistant. If using a live tree check to make sure it is fresh. A fresh tree will have needles that do not pull off easily, do not fall off when the trunk is tapped on the ground, and do not break when bent.
- When a live tree is brought home a fresh cut should be made a few inches above the first cut and the tree should be quickly placed in water. Make sure the tree-stand stays filled with water because a tree will dry out quickly in a warm room.
- Keep Christmas trees away from sources of ignition like fireplaces and portable heaters. When choosing a location for the Christmas tree, do not block an escape route like a hallway or doorway.
- Do not overload power cords. Connecting too many strings of lights together on a tree can overload a power cord and cause overheated wires and increase the risk of an electrical short.

The holidays are a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the good fortune of the past year and to enjoy decorating the home. Following a few safety precautions while decorating for the holidays can help make sure that families enjoy the season and keep themselves and homes safe.

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*Ag Safety S.T.A.T. - Safe Tactics for Ag Today* is an e-mail newsletter prepared by Dee Jepsen, Extension Agricultural Safety Specialist and team members from the State Safety Office, in the Department of Food, Agricultural and Biological Engineering at OSU. The primary goal of this monthly newsletter is to help you stay connected to everyday safety news and activities that may be used in your own newsletters or programs. If you have safety-related questions or program ideas that you would like to share, please contact Dr. Jepsen at [jepsen.4@osu.edu](mailto:jepsen.4@osu.edu)  
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