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

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## **THOUGHTS from the EDITOR - NEW YEAR'S SAFETY RESOLUTIONS**

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

A new year has just begun, and many of us like to make New Year's resolutions: to spend more time with friends and family, get more exercise, get more sleep, quit a bad habit, or perhaps take on a new habit. But what about incorporating a safety resolution onto that list?

Here are a few ideas to get you started.

*In the Car* - Resolve to be a better driver, wear your seatbelt, don't get distracted with cell phones or other electronic gadgets mounted in the vehicle.

*In the Home* - Change the batteries in the smoke detector (or just get a smoke detector!), eliminate extension cords, clean your chimney, make a fire escape plan and discuss it with everyone in the household.

*Just for fun* - always wear the correct protective gear for the sporting activity (this includes bicycles, snowboards, and ATVs)

The New Year is here, resolve to make it a safe one!

## **A FUN SAFETY QUOTE of the MONTH**

A new feature of this newsletter is the safety quote of the month. Here's the first one for the New Year: "Have another day by being safe today!"

## **FARM SAFETY ROUND-UPS (day camps) LAUNCH ANOTHER YEAR**

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, and now we're heading into our 13th year of safety camp programming!

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.

## **SLOW DOWN in WINTER**

### **Theresa Calip, Program Coordinator**

The days are now shorter, darker, and colder, but many people are out on Ohio's rural roads. In addition to the local population, many visitors come from other areas, drawn by snow-covered fields, smaller crowds, and slower overall pace of the season. The well-prepared and aware motorist knows that in winter, what you stow in your car is important; a shovel, blanket, flashlights or flares, and a gas tank that is never allowed to run low are fundamental recommendations. However, just as important to safe winter driving on rural roads, are the facts you stow in your mind:

- Be aware that horse-drawn buggies, wagons, and other slow-moving vehicles may be on the roadway, even in inclement weather
- Be aware of increased stopping distances. Coming to a safe stop while driving at 30 mph in the rain alone is approximately 188 ft. Stopping distances in snow, slush and ice can increase by up to 10 times, depending on road conditions
- Be aware of decreased closure times between yourself and a slow-moving vehicle due to wet/icy road conditions
- Be aware that road conditions can change quickly, particularly in hilly areas, from dry to icy
- Be aware of decreased visibility due to shorter day length, overcast skies, or precipitation

For all the above-listed points, the necessary action to take is the same: SLOW DOWN in winter for a safe trip.

## **THE SAFETY FACTS ABOUT ICE**

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

During the cold days of winter, not everyone is sorry to see temperatures dip below freezing. Many look forward to venturing out onto frozen rivers, lakes and ponds to enjoy skating, ice fishing and other wintertime sports. The problem is there is no such thing as absolutely safe ice. The depth of water under the ice, size of the water body, water chemistry and currents, the distribution of the load on the ice, and local climatic conditions are all factors that effect the safety of ice. In fact in February of last year 126 people were stranded on a miles-wide ice floe in Lake Erie when it broke free and floated away from the Ohio shoreline.

According to the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, only when ice reaches 3 inches thick can one person on cross-country skis venture onto ice. Even at 4 inches, ice can only support 200 pounds and that needs to account for your weight and any gear. The Ohio Division of Natural Resources (ODNR) provides these recommendations for those planning to journey onto frozen waterways.

- 4" of new clear ice is the minimum thickness for travel on foot
- 5" is the minimum for snowmobiles and ATVs
- 8"-12" for cars or small trucks
- Check with a local resort or bait shop for known thin ice areas.
- Refrain from driving on ice whenever possible.

Additionally ODNR suggests the following before going out onto the ice:

- Let someone know when you will be on the ice and when you will return.
- Wear a life jacket or float coat.
- Carry two screwdrivers, ice picks, or large nails to help gain a firm grip, should you have to pull yourself out of the water.
- Avoid areas of thin ice or open water.

If the unexpected happens and you fall through the ice remember:

- Try not to panic.
- Do not remove your winter clothing. Heavy clothes will not drag you down. They trap air to provide warmth and flotation.
- Turn toward the direction you came. That is probably the strongest ice.
- Place your hands and arms on the unbroken surface.
- Kick your feet and dig in your ice picks to work your way back onto the solid ice.
- Lie flat on the ice and roll away from the hole. This will help distribute your weight.
- Get to a warm, dry, sheltered area.

Winter in Ohio provides many outdoor activities. If being on the ice is one you enjoy make sure you prepare yourself with as much information and equipment as necessary to do it safely. Remember there is no such thing as absolutely safe ice and its strength varies from spot to spot, constant preparedness is the most reliable strength.

## **UNIVERSAL DESIGN?**

### **Kent McGuire - Ohio AgrAbility Program Coordinator**

Did you know that Universal Design concepts help thousands of people perform their daily routines? Universal Design is the design of products or environments, developed with built-in flexibility, which can be used by all people, regardless of disability or ability. You may already have universal design concepts in your house, garage or barn and do not even realize it. Lever style door handles and faucets, or flat rocker panel light switches make opening doors, turning on water and lighting a room easier. Side by side refrigerators and revolving or pull out shelving in cabinets make food preparation more accessible. Tools or utensils with larger easy grip and ergonomically designed handles can make tasks less strenuous. So this winter when you are shoveling snow from your sidewalk with your new snow shovel that has an off-set handle and larger grip, take a moment to think about how Universal Design has just made your fight against winter weather a little easier.

## **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TIP of the MONTH: *EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS SUPPLIES***

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

The start of the New Year is an excellent time to take stock of home emergency preparedness supplies. Typical supplies that are good to have on hand and in good working condition include the following:

- Flashlight and fresh batteries
- Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Fire extinguisher
- Candles and lighter
- Bottled drinking water and non-perishable, high energy food items
- Extra medications and personal hygiene items
- Infant and pet care necessities
- Cell phone with car charger

Have a safe and prosperous 2010!

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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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