

**AG SAFETY S.T.A.T. - SAFE TACTICS FOR AG TODAY**

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**THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR** – **Coping with the Pressures of Farming****Dee Jepsen** – **State Agricultural Safety and Health Leader**

A mental wellness publication was produced by my colleagues in Ireland. Farm stressors are fairly universal. This publication contains effective strategies for identifying and relieving every day stresses farmers may feel because of their unique occupation. Access the bulletin [here](#). Teagasc is the national Agricultural and Food Development Authority providing integrated research, advisory and training services to the agricultural industry and rural communities of Ireland.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS – Grain C.A.R.T. Scheduling**

Agricultural rescue training and education are an integral part to protecting our work force of families tied to agriculture in Ohio. The Grain C.A.R.T. (Comprehensive Agricultural Rescue Trailer) was designed and built to do that twofold. Opportunities exist to offer professional training to first responders and/or deliver grain safety awareness curriculum for outreach education to farmers and agricultural industries by scheduling the Grain C.A.R.T. for your area in 2018. Programming is being booked now to kick off in March. Please call or email Lisa Pfeifer at (614) 292-9455, [pfeifer.6@osu.edu](mailto:pfeifer.6@osu.edu), if you would like to discuss program planning centered around utilizing the Grain C.A.R.T. in your geographic area.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS – Hunter Education Course**

The infamous culinary event of the year, Thanksgiving, is also the beginning of spotting hunter orange in the fields for many. If you plan to hunt this fall or bring a new young hunter along, take a look at the Division of Wildlife hunter certification course offerings at <http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/education-and-outdoor-discovery/hunter-and-trapper-education>.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS – Chain Saw Safety****Lisa Pfeifer** – **OSU Ag Safety and Health Education Coordinator**

Connect to our fact sheet covering chain saws on Ohioline at, <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/aex-79033>. Ohioline is the Ohio State University Extension vehicle for delivering educational online resources to the community.

If you are looking for hands-on safety training contact the Ohio Forestry Association to sign-up for their Chainsaw Safety classes coming up in November. See their website to register at <http://www.ohioforest.org/?page=CSAW>.



## **SAFETY RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT – Agricultural Employee Safety**



In agriculture there can be unique circumstances that apply to worker safety and the resources available specific to agricultural safety compliance can be limited. OSU Ag Safety and Health has dedicated a section of their website to address agricultural workplaces and employee safety. This section of the website was developed to provide information, resources and training materials specific to the agricultural workplace and managing safety compliance issues. The website link is

<http://agsafety.osu.edu/programs/cfaes-osh>

### **OHIO AGRABILITY – Lighting Solutions for the Dark Days of Winter**

**Laura Akgerman – Disability Services Coordinator for Ohio AgrAbility**

Does your workload get lighter as the days get shorter and darker? Probably not. Animals still need fed and tended to, work needs to get done, and equipment needs fixed.

A well-lit work space is important to ensure that you can work safely and effectively. Task lighting makes work safer and easier, allowing you to see your equipment and workspace. Task lighting can be portable, permanently attached, or you can even wear it. LED lights are one solution for lighting a poorly lit area, or upgrading older, expensive to use lights.

#### **Task lighting**

Task lighting is the lighting available in a workspace, or the area where a task will be performed. Poor lighting, such as only overhead lights, can cause shadows, and make work more difficult and dangerous by hiding sharp edges and other hazards. Inadequate lighting can cause eyestrain, blurred vision, dry and burning eyes, and headaches.

Task Lighting safety practices

(from <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/aex-79017> )

- Provide lighting with adjustable intensity to meet the needs for different tasks
- Provide portable lighting at the task location as appropriate
- Keep walls, ceilings and floors clean, and use lighter colors on them to reflect light
- Replace and clean lights regularly
- Allow enough time for the eyes to adapt from a well-lighted to a low-lighted area and vice versa
- Use filter to diffuse overhead lighting



**Figure 1: Adding task lighting to the dairy parlor**

#### **Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs)**

LED lights are available in Edison base (screw in), spotlights, floodlights, linear tubes or light strips. LEDs come on instantly, and are excellent for task lighting. LEDs last for years, and become brighter in cold temperatures, making them ideal for use outdoors, in barns, or cold storage.

LEDs use at least 75% less energy than halogen or incandescent, and at least 15% less energy than compact fluorescent bulbs, saving on electricity costs. LED lights do cost more than other types of lights, but their long life and lower energy costs make up for the higher price. The Minnesota Department of Commerce did a yearlong study on an all LED green house and found that the LEDs saved 47% on energy costs, and would take only 2.2 years to pay for the cost of LED lights (and the lights will last much longer

than 2.2 years). <https://www.cleanenergyresourceteams.org/blog/year-long-study-led-greenhouse-lighting-yields-illuminating-results>

[LED Headlamps](#) are ideal for wearing when you need a light, but don't want to use a flashlight. The headset has elastic bands that allow you to wear it on your head, and the light beam is directed at whatever you are looking at, which makes it ideal for working on equipment, walking the dog at night, or walking/running outside after dark.

One example of LED lights improving a worksite is how Ohio AgrAbility used LED lighting in the milking parlor and barn of a dairy farmer who had lost some of his vision due to Diabetes. He had a severely restricted field of vision, he couldn't tell the difference between similar colors, and was rendered nearly blind by changes in light intensity. Before LED lights were installed, it was difficult for him to work with the cows, and he had to depend on his employees to do the bulk of the work. After LED lights were installed, the farmer was able to resume working, he could inspect the cows to be sure they were healthy, and could safely move throughout the barns and his property.



Figure 2: Before LED lights were installed in the dairy barn.



Figure 3: After LED lights were installed in the dairy barn

For more information about LED lights, and examples of LED uses, please see the fact sheet from University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension: Lighting Technology: LED lamps for home, farm and small business. <https://learningstore.uwex.edu/Assets/pdfs/A4050.pdf>

For more information, please contact Laura Akgerman, Ohio AgrAbility and OSU Extension Disability Services Coordinator, at [Akgerman.4@osu.edu](mailto:Akgerman.4@osu.edu), or 614-292-0622.

### **INJURY PREVENTION – Safety Starts with Housekeeping** **Kent McGuire – OSU Ag Safety and Health Coordinator**

A clean orderly workplace sets the tone for everything else. It creates an atmosphere that employees want to work in. It sends a message to visitors that you take your work seriously. Customers and vendors can see there is a pride in the quality of workmanship. Most importantly, everyone can sense that this is a professional and safe workplace. Work areas such as the maintenance shop, livestock barns, and equipment / material storage buildings are typically used to the fullest extent, however a priority to maintain a clean and orderly workplace in these areas is essential to avoid falls, fires and many other types of injuries. Checklists are a useful way to eliminate the hazards of poor workplace housekeeping. Here is a simple checklist that can be used to help keep your agricultural workplace safe and organized.

- ☐ Workstations / workbenches are clean and free of clutter.
- ☐ Materials stored in clearly labeled containers and in designated storage areas only.
- ☐ Floors are clean, dry and in good condition.
- ☐ Spills and leaks of any type are cleaned up quickly and properly.
- ☐ Proper waste containers are located in easy to access areas and emptied regularly.
- ☐ Oily rags are disposed of in covered metal containers.
- ☐ Tools and equipment are kept clean, well maintained and stored properly.
- ☐ Electrical boxes or components are free from dust buildup and cobwebs.
- ☐ Electrical cords, plugs and outlets are inspected regularly for wear and damage.
- ☐ Stools and chairs are tucked away so they are not tripping hazards.
- ☐ Drawers and cabinet doors are kept closed to prevent tripping hazards.
- ☐ Aisles, stairways, exits and entrances are free of obstructions.
- ☐ Materials are safely stacked so they will not collapse or fall.
- ☐ Fire Extinguishers are easily accessible and not blocked by stored materials or other obstructions.

Using the checklist on a regular interval (weekly or monthly) can identify waste accumulation areas, locations that need cleaned or organized, and can significantly reduced the risk of injury.

For more information about the OSU Ag Safety visit <https://agsafety.osu.edu/> or contact Kent McGuire, OSU Agricultural Safety & Health, at [mcguire.225@osu.edu](mailto:mcguire.225@osu.edu) or 614-292-0588.

## **Emergency Management – Preventing Barn Fires**

### **Kent McGuire – OSU Ag Safety and Health Coordinator**

Barn fires can be a farmer's worst nightmare. The majority of barn fires end with tragic, costly, or even heartbreaking outcomes. These losses can include loss of human life, livestock, or valuable equipment and in many cases loss of the barn structure itself. The majority of barn fires end up being a result of lack of fire safety knowledge and even carelessness. Many barn fires could be prevented by: good barn layout, a usable fire plan, and clear policies about how the barn and equipment should be maintained.

One of the most important steps to take is to create a fire plan. Have fire and emergency contact numbers posted in prominent locations in the barn. Make an evacuation plan with at least two exit routes. Plan an emergency exit route for livestock that leads to a fenced area away from the barn, also consider how to prevent livestock from trying to re-enter the barn while it is on fire. Finally, teach family or employees the fire plan and walk through it at least annually.

Additional barn fire prevention tips that can be used to minimized risk of a fire include:

- No smoking should be allowed in or near the barn. Post signs!
- Maintain good housekeeping by removing combustible materials such as feed bags, oily rags, hay debris, excessive dust, or stored fuels.
- If flammables such as fuels must be store in the barn, isolated them in a safe areaway from ignition sources and consider using a flammable storage cabinet.

- Make sure electrical wiring is in good condition. All breaker panels and electrical boxes should have the proper covers in place. Keep all electrical components clean, free from layers of dust or cobwebs.
- Use industrial grade extension cords, keeping them out of reach or travel path of livestock to prevent them from stepping on or chewing the cords. Also, do not connect several cords together; use a longer cord for longer distances.
- Place fire extinguishers strategically in barn near electrical panels or potential ignition sources. Check the extinguishers regularly.
- In a barn or building, maximum travel distance to a fire extinguisher should not exceed 75 feet. Add additional fire extinguishers if needed.
- Portable space heaters should not be left unattended and turned off when you leave the area. Space heaters should also have a shut-off device that activates if the unit is knocked over.
- Follow the manufactures guidelines when using water tank heaters, heat tape or heat lamps. Keep heat lamps the recommended distance from combustibles such as bedding, cardboard boxes or dry lumber.
- Store hay and other feed properly to prevent spontaneous combustion. More information about proper storage of hay or straw can be found at <https://agcrops.osu.edu/newsletter/corn-newsletter/2017-19/hay-and-straw-barn-fires-real-danger>

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## **Emergency Management – Thanksgiving Fire Safety**

**Lisa Pfeifer – OSU Ag Safety and Health Education Coordinator**

Thanksgiving is just around the corner and soon the stovetops, ovens, and turkey fryers will be the workhorses of the day. Alarming, according to the National Fire Protection Association (USFA), the number of cooking fires on Thanksgiving is three times as high as on any other day of the year. Keep your festivities from becoming a part of the statistic by following some basic safety tips.

- Test your smoke alarms to ensure they are working
- Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen and know how to use it
- Clean your oven in advance of the big cooking event
- Call 911 without delay should a kitchen fire breakout
- Avoid becoming distracted by guests
- Stay in the kitchen while cooking on the stovetop
- Thaw your turkey completely before using a fryer
- Keep children away from the stove, oven, and fryer
- Keep the floor clear of trip hazards
- Keep knives from edges of work surfaces and out of reach of children
- Be sure electric cords are not dangling off the counter or onto the stovetop
- Get a good night's sleep prior to hosting, so you can remain alert in the kitchen

For more information about OSU Ag Safety, visit <http://agsafety.osu.edu> or contact Lisa Pfeifer, OSU Agricultural Safety & Health, at [pfeifer.6@osu.edu](mailto:pfeifer.6@osu.edu) or 614-292-9455.

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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 maybe 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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