

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

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Safe Driving During Harvest Season

Dee Jepsen – State Agricultural Safety and Health Leader

As tractors, combines, and grain trucks begin to appear on Ohio roads, roadway safety becomes a focus for all who share the road with farm machinery.

Vehicle collisions can happen at any time. Many are a result of speed differential between slower-moving farm equipment and passenger vehicles, where the motoring public doesn't slow down in time before colliding with machinery. Other collisions are a result of cars and trucks passing farm implements without a clear distance of on-coming traffic. Following safe road practices, farm operators can do their part to be seen with enhanced visibility. And while SMV operators are not required to move out of the way for passing traffic, they may choose to do so when enough berm is available. Other steps for enhanced visibility are listed below.

Passenger vehicles can do their part for roadway safety. Drivers in rural areas should be alert to the possibility of encountering slow moving farm vehicles, and be prepared to slow or stop. A little patience is needed this season, as farmers move equipment and grain from the fields to the market. Try to avoid those roads where farmers are on the move, and limit tailgating or swerving behind the large equipment where you can't be seen. Additional tips for sharing the roads with farm machinery are listed below.

Sharing the Road with Motorists - things every SMV operator should know

Before traveling on public roads remember:

- Lock brake pedals.
- Adjust mirrors for good vision.
- Make sure that all warning flashers, lights, and SMV emblems are in proper operating condition, clean, and easily visible. If they are covered with field dust, wipe them off before leaving the field.
- Check tire inflation pressures. Inflate the tires to the maximum recommended pressure for long distance travel.

When traveling on public roads:

- Watch for pot holes or obstacles that could tip your vehicle or your load.
- Listen for cars and stay alert. Often vehicles will rapidly approach from the rear at 3 to 4 times the speed of the tractor.
- Keep a constant lookout for pedestrians, animals, mailboxes, steep ditch embankments, and other roadway

obstacles.

- Slow down for sharp curves or when going down a hill.
- Consider using an escort vehicle to follow behind.
- Be cognizant of high traffic times, usually mornings and late afternoons. While it is impossible to avoid operating on the roads during these times, it may be possible to limit road transportation during these high flow times.

Safety Signs and Lighting:

SMV Sign - With the mounted point up, place the sign on the vehicle 2-6 feet above the ground. Place the perpendicular plane to the direction of travel (+ -)10 degrees. Place the sign as near to rear center as possible.

Other ASABE recommendations include:

- Two headlights.
- At least one tail lamp, mounted on the left side facing the rear of the tractor.
- At least two amber warning lights, visible from front and rear, mounted at the same level at least 42 inches above ground level.
- At least two red reflectors, visible from the rear and mounted on either side.
- Amber warning extremity lights, visible from front and rear, mounted over dual- or triple-wheeled vehicles.
- Speed Identification Symbol (SIS) on high-speed tractors and equipment.

Sharing the Road with Farm Equipment - things every motorist should know

- Farm machinery has a legal right to use public roads just as other motor vehicles.
- Farm machinery can unexpectedly turn onto a public road from a field or driveway. It is important for everyone's safety to have patience and share the road.
- Farm machinery travels slower than normal traffic, often at speeds of 25 mph or less. Automobile drivers must quickly identify farm equipment and slow down immediately to avoid rear end crashes.
- Farm machinery operators may not be able to see you because the large equipment or a load can block part of their rearward view. If you can't see the driver, the driver can't see you.
- Slow moving farm machinery traveling less than 25 mph should display a slow moving vehicle emblem on the back of the equipment. Look for this sign and adjust your speed accordingly.
- Machinery that is half on the road and half on the shoulder may suddenly move completely onto the road.
- Extra-wide farm machinery may take up more than one lane to avoid hitting obstacles such as mailboxes and road signs.

Before passing farm machinery:

- Check to be sure the machinery is not turning left. Look for left turn lights or hand signals. If the machinery slows and pulls toward the right side of the road, the operator is likely preparing to make a wide left turn. Likewise, sometimes to make a right turn with wide equipment, the driver must fade to the left.
- Determine if the road is wide enough for you and the machinery to safely share.
- Look for roadside obstacles such as mailboxes, bridges, or road signs that may cause the machinery to move to the center of the road.
- Be sure there is adequate distance for you to safely pass.

For more information, contact Dee Jepsen at jepsen.4@osu.edu or 614-292-6008.



SAFETY RESOURCE SPOTLIGHT – Rural Roadway Safety



The Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health provides a webpage specific to rural roadway safety. The page contains handouts, posters, videos, and media stories all related to keeping the agricultural roadways safe. Here is the link to the site for more information: <https://www.public-health.uiowa.edu/gpcah/outreach-2/topics/rural-roadway-safety/>

Ohio AgrAbility in Action: Becoming an Ohio AgrAbility Client

Laura Akgerman – Disability Services Coordinator for Ohio AgrAbility

The Ohio AgrAbility Program's dual missions of education and assistance to farmers with disabilities were on display at the 2018 Farm Science Review September 18 – 20. Staff, farmers and vendors were on hand to answer questions, greet visitors, demonstrate assistive technology and equipment, and talk about Ohio AgrAbility. To ensure no mobility devices ran out of power, OAP provided a mobility scooter & chair charging station for participants needing a re-charge. To facilitate access to the field demonstrations, AgrAbility sponsored an accessible shuttle bus to transport visitors from the main exhibit area to the farm fields.

Education and resources

OAP joined FSR management in the [First Step program](#), which provides students and teachers educational opportunities and displays, and includes a worksheet for the students to complete. OAP hosted daily informal workshops on modifications for the barn, worksite, and equipment. OAP hosted Meredith Sweeney, an Occupational Therapist from the OSU Wexner Medical Center, who presented *Modifying a Vehicle for Independence and Mobility*, a very informative talk about evaluating and training drivers who need modifications to their vehicles due to age, medical conditions, or disability.

In addition to our publications and workshops, OAP showcased some of our most important education and outreach partners: our farmers. For FSR 2018, OAP invited our farmers to spend a few hours in the tent to greet visitors, try out new equipment, share their experiences with Ohio AgrAbility, and talk to students about farming with a disability. A group of OSU Capstone students spent time in the exhibit tent learning about the needs of farmers with mobility limitations who want to safely access a skid loader. The Capstone students are building on the work of last year's Capstone students, who created a design plan for an accessible and safe skid loader. The current team plan to move beyond design and modify a skid loader, and test the prototype for mobility and safety.

AgrAbility education and outreach went well beyond the OAP exhibit tent. In the Utzinger Memorial Garden, staff presented two sessions on Gardening through the Lifespan. Even when staff were not presenting workshops in the garden, OAP was still on display - staff designed large "garden signs" with tips on gardening with low vision, arthritis and other imitations, which were planted throughout the garden. OAP staff also presented a session on Accessible AgriTourism at the Small Farm Center, and gave an impromptu TV interview after the workshop. In addition to the exhibit tent and workshops, Ohio AgrAbility hosted the Universal Design Garage (part of a larger UD house) and offered examples and information on using universal design in the workshop and farm.

Assistance and equipment demonstrations

OAP's exhibit area featured resources and publications on farming and gardening with a disability, and adaptive equipment for rural lifestyles and agricultural businesses. FSR gives Ohio AgrAbility the opportunity to host some of the companies we partner with to serve Ohio farmers with disabilities, and allows OAP staff, farmers and visitors to try out new equipment and assistive technology. Companies in the OAP exhibit area included [Life Essentials](#), [PWR EZ Systems](#), [K & M Manufacturing](#), [Propel Sliding Door Automation](#), and [Strong-Arm Lift](#). These vendors display and demonstrate their products, answer questions, and work with staff and farmers to problem solve issues that may limit the farmers productivity or ability to safely use and access their equipment and facilities.

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

INJURY PREVENTION - Safety During Harvest Season

Kent McGuire – OSU Ag Safety and Health Coordinator

As harvest season begins, safety should be a priority on the farm and with grain handling operations. Consider that it is a time that involves long hours and the need for multiple pieces of equipment working simultaneously to be efficient and productive. The continuous activity, diminished daylight and stresses that can be associated with harvest can often lead to agricultural related injuries. Common injuries during fall harvest include slips, trips and falls; blunt trauma incidents; sprains / strains; entanglement; and engulfment. Guidelines to reduce the risk of an injury during harvest include:

Reducing Fatigue:

- To reduce fatigue, try to get enough sleep. This is your body's time to rest.
- Set a pace for yourself, and plan out your day's activities.
- Take short breaks throughout the day. Get out of the combine or truck for a few minutes, and do something to get away from the equipment and revitalize.

Equipment Safety:

- Follow the procedures in the operator's manual of equipment for safe operation, maintenance, and trouble shooting
- Keep equipment properly maintained and check all guards are in position and correctly fitted before starting work.
- Insure equipment has adequate lighting for working in the dark. Increase caution when working in early morning or late evening when daylight is diminished.
- Maintain 3 points of contact when mounting or dismounting equipment.
(1 hand and 2 feet) or (2 hands and 1 foot)
- Ensure that hand holds or railings are in safe operating condition.
- Exercise caution when steps or walking surfaces are wet or dirty.
- Avoid jumping off of the last step and anticipate changes in ground elevation or rough terrain when dismounting from the last step.
- Be alert to you surroundings. Know where equipment is being positioned and be observant to individuals who may be walking around equipment.
- When working with others around equipment, maintain eye contact and communicate your intentions with the other person.
- Utilize safe travel routes between fields, and take into account potential problems with automobile traffic and narrow roadways. Use escort vehicles when needed.

Grain Handling Safety:

- Use Personal Protective Equipment when appropriate (safety glasses, gloves, etc..).

- Utilize respiratory protection such as an N95 respirator in dusty environments.
- Use hearing protection in work environments louder than 85 decibels for an extended period of time.
- Know where overhead power lines are so they can be avoided when moving equipment or using a portable auger.
- Insure there is adequate lighting at the grain storage facility when working in low light conditions to prevent slips, trips, and falls.
- Never enter a grain bin while grain-handling components, such as augers, are in operation. Lockout/tagout procedures should be developed for all equipment.
- If you must enter the bin use a body harness, lifeline and station a person at the entry point to monitor the person in the bin.

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

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – Combine Fire Precautions

Rory Lewandowski – OSU Extension Educator, Wayne County

Each year I see photos and video clips of combine fires come across my twitter feed. This year has been no different. Some of the comments on photos and videos of 2018 combine fires mention how quickly fires started, spread and engulfed the combine. Crop residue accumulation near a direct heat source such as the engine or exhaust system, or on and around bearings, belts and chains where heat is generated, accounts for the majority of combine fires. There are some good articles regarding steps to take to prevent and avoid combine fires and stay safe during the harvest season. Below are some safety recommendations from Dick Nicolai, a South Dakota Extension specialist and John Wilson, a University of Nebraska Extension Educator.

- Keep the combine as clean as possible. During harvest, frequently blow dry chaff, leaves and other crop materials off the machine. Remove any materials that have wrapped around bearings, belts and other moving parts. Be sure to check those pockets that house wires or lights and where chaff accumulates.
- Keep wiring and fuses in proper working condition. Watch for frayed wiring and worn connectors. Sparks produced can ignite grain dust, crop residues or fuel vapors. Check wiring and insulation for rodent damage and replace as needed.
- Make sure the exhaust system is in good repair.
- Keep fittings greased and watch for overheated bearings.
- Use a ground chain attached to the combine frame to prevent static charges from igniting dry chaff and harvest residue, letting the chain drag on the ground while in the field.
- Prior to fueling a hot combine, wait 15 minutes to reduce the risk of a spill volatilizing and igniting. Never refuel equipment with the engine running.
- Don't park a hot combine in the shed or shop. After a long day of harvesting, smoldering hot spots may be present in the combine. If those spots suddenly flare up, at least you won't lose the building!
- Keep at least one fully-charged, 10-pound ABC dry chemical fire extinguisher with an Underwriter's Laboratory approval in the combine cab.
- Mount a second, larger fire extinguisher on the outside of the machine at a height easily reached from ground level.
- Have a plan if a fire starts. Turn off the engine; get the fire extinguisher and your phone. Get out and get help.
- Stay a safe distance away.
- Call 911 before beginning to extinguish the fire.
- Approach the fire with extreme caution. Small fires can flare up quickly with the addition of air (by opening doors or hatches).

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – Upcoming Events Focused on Preparedness

Lisa Pfeifer – OSU Ag Safety and Health Education Coordinator

It is a busy month on the preparedness awareness front. Join in some of the events listed below to help foster readiness in your community.

Oct 1-5 Fungal Disease Awareness Week: Think Fungus!

The CDC and partners have organized this week to highlight the importance of recognizing serious fungal diseases early enough in the course of a patient's illness to provide life-saving treatment.

Current wet weather conditions and harvest can be two environmental contributors that lead to increased fungus in the agricultural work sector. Wet conditions may lead to concerns of mold, to remediate link to CDC information by visiting <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/default.htm>. If harvest impacts your breathing assess the symptoms of occupational lung disease by visiting <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org>, then seek advice from your medical professional.

To learn more about the CDC's October campaign, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/fungal/awareness-week.html>

October 7-13 Fire Prevention Week: Look. Listen. Learn. Be aware. Fire can happen anywhere.

The National Fire Protection Association recognizes the week as a time to focus on the lessons of fire prevention. The leading messages to reduce risk to fire:

- Look for places fire can start
- Listen for the sound of the smoke alarm
- Learn two ways out of each room

For more resources visit www.firepreventionweek.org.

Oct 18 Ohio EMA Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drill

Held annually on the third Thursday in October, ShakeOut is set for October 18th at 10:18AM. Ohioans are encouraged to Drop, Cover, and Hold On.

The Ohio Emergency Management Agency media release conveyed, "People may say 'Why do we need to practice earthquake drills in Ohio?' We practice because Ohio does experience earthquakes," said Ohio EMA Executive Director Sima Merick. "Ohio has had four low-scale earthquakes so far this year. It is also good to know earthquake safety in the event you've traveled to another state or country where quakes can occur with higher magnitude and frequency."

The Ohio EMA wants ShakeOut to get people to talk about emergency preparedness and to plan for all hazards and disasters such as earthquakes, floods, fires, tornadoes or hazmat incidents.

For more information visit the Ohio EMA media release [here](#) or to register for the event visit <https://www.shakeout.org>.

Flu Season is Upon Us

Get a jump on the flu by scheduling an appointment to get the flu vaccine. See what influenza vaccination coverage has looked like in past years for the state of Ohio, <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview/reportshtml/trends/index.html>.

The easiest way to protect against the flu, the Ohio Department of Health reminds, is to get a seasonal flu vaccine every year!

Some good flu prevention practices

- Get a seasonal flu vaccine
- Wash your hands
- Cover your cough
- Eat a balanced diet
- Drink plenty of water
- Exercise regularly
- Get plenty of rest
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Stay away from those who are sick when possible
- Stay home if you get sick and keep sick children home from school or day care

For more information about the flu you can visit the Ohio Department of Health's website page covering the area at <https://www.odh.ohio.gov/seasflu/seasonalinfluenza.aspx/>, or the CDC's flu section at <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>.

For information about OSU Ag Safety, visit <https://agsafety.osu.edu/> or contact Lisa Pfeifer, OSU Agricultural Safety & Health, at pfeifer.6@osu.edu or 614-292-9455.

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
