

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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Harvest Safety



Harvest is a busy and sometimes hectic time for farmers and agricultural workers because crops ripen at their time rather than at the schedule of the farmer. More workers, more equipment, and a compressed time schedule for harvest increases the potential for accidents and injuries.

Employers and employees can increase safety and decrease the potential for equipment downtime by inspection of the work sites, inspection and maintenance of equipment, and training employees in advance of the harvest season.

Employers can plan for a safe harvest by:

- Inspection of work areas, grain bins, sheds, etc.
- Correct potential hazards that may require repairs, renovations, or maybe even new equipment.
- Training new employees and reviewing with older employees: The areas of equipment operation, familiarity with field conditions, such as overhead wires, field road depressions and other potential hazards.
- Review and update the proper personal protective equipment that will be required during the season.
- Training should include reviewing with personnel the need for dressing in the proper clothing during work, such as no loose clothing and secure hair - both to eliminate the chance of an entanglement.
- Informing all employees to stay clear of augers, discharge spouts, fans, conveyors and other moving parts of the equipment.
- Strictly enforcing the “No-Rider” policy on equipment that isn’t designed for multiple riders.

- By enforcing a “no drug/alcohol” policy.
- Keep kids out of the area where the equipment is being used.
- Strictly enforcing the “no-set-no rider” rule and not allowing a person to ride on the side of a piece of equipment.
- Making sure that no bystanders or employees are standing in the paths of the equipment.

Universal Equipment Precautions –

- The off-season should be used to get all your equipment ready for the coming harvest. Extra parts for strategic jobs should be kept on hand to minimize the downtime during the harvest season.
- If you don’t have it, prepare a daily maintenance schedule for the operators to perform at the end of each work day. Also, a good operator will fuel and lubricate his machine at the end of each day in order to get a good start the following day.
- Always shut the equipment off before doing maintenance or making adjustments.
- Check and secure all guards before starting up equipment.
- When hydraulic controls are present, be sure to block them before doing repairs. Do not operate the controls from beside or behind the tractor.
- Always turn the equipment off and remove the key before clearing debris from the machines.
- Always keep a fully charged fire extinguisher, at least a 10 lb., type ABC on each piece of harvest equipment.

Safe harvest always begins with the prevention of accidents. Accidents can greatly be reduced by weather awareness, equipment in good repair and well trained operators.

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Excerpts: www.statefundca.com / www.nasdonline.org
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