

MAFES Dawg Tracks



February 1, 2010 Ten Commandments of Tractor Safety



I read recently where tractor related fatalities have increased over the nation, but here in Mississippi they have decreased over the past couple of years. At one time or another we have all heard about tractor or farm implement related accidents. None are comforting to hear or read about.

This has been used several times, but I believe that it is always beneficial to new and old ag employees alike. Spring will be here before we know it and planting time will be upon us.

- ***Know your tractor, its implements and how they work:***

Read the manufacturer's instructions and operator's manuals; get familiar with the contents before operating any of the equipment. Pay extra attention to the sections on care and maintenance so that the equipment can be maintained in good repair. That way, it will be ready for use when the time is right to use it.

- ***Use ROPS and seat belt whenever and wherever applicable:***

If your tractor has a foldable ROPS, fold it down only when absolutely necessary. Fold it out and lock again as soon as possible. In other words, don't fold it down when it isn't necessary. When the ROPS is folded down, don't use the seatbelt. As we have discussed at different times, most tractor fatalities are caused by overturns, thus the reason for no seatbelt when the ROPS is not in use.

- ***Be familiar with the terrain and work area - walk the area first to be sure that it is safe:***

Use special caution on slopes. Slow down for all turns, and stay off the highways whenever possible.

- ***Never be in a hurry or take chances:***

Always think safety first - then take your time and do it right.

- ***Keep your hitches low and always on the drawbar:***

The tractor could flip backwards.

- ***Never start an engine in a closed shed or garage:***

We know that exhaust fumes contain carbon monoxide, which is odorless, colorless, and can be deadly.

- ***Always keep the PTO properly shielded:***

Make it a habit to walk around your tractor and PTO driven implement – **NEVER** over, through or between the tractor and implement, particular if either is running. Actually, the PTO rotates with enough speed that it could kill you.

- ***Never leave a tractor engine running or attempt to get off a tractor that is moving:***

Shut it down before leaving the seat. Can you imagine the danger that a runaway tractor could cause?

- ***Never refuel while the engine is hot or running:***

Another tip is that you shouldn't add coolant to the radiator while it is hot. Hot coolant can scald or burn you.

- ***Keep all children off and away from your tractor and its implements at all times:***

Children are naturally attracted to tractors and the work that they do. As we know, a tractor's work isn't child's play. Don't be alarmed at a child's disappointment when asked to move from the area of tractor work. We all know that a child's disappointment or a reprimand only lasts for a little while.

It would be good if adults could forget like young kids. Temporary disappointment for a little while is much better than the absence of a lifetime (if they were hurt by the tractor). **At the same time, we should take extra precaution to make sure that no one, children or adults, is in the working area of a tractor or other implement.**