

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



February 22, 2010 Recognizing Farm Equipment Hazards



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

We know that operating farm equipment always presents a serious threat to life and limb. It is imperative that we remember to recognize the dangers and potential hazards when working with farm equipment and to take the necessary steps to protect ourselves and our fellow workers.

## When we are working on farm equipment, preventing accidents depends on:

- Knowledge of hazards.
- Keeping all guards and shields in place and well maintained.
- Pay attention to the safety instructions as printed on the safety decals of the equipment.
- Always disengage the power, shut off the engine, pocket the key and wait on all parts to completely stop moving before doing any kind of work on the machine.

## RECOGNIZING COMMON FARM EQUIPMENT HAZARDS:

As we all know, there are many and varied types of equipment used in typical farm operations. However, the hazards involved are common to almost all makes and models. Time is well spent when we use it to teach the recognition of common farm equipment hazards and take the appropriate action to avoid accidental contact.

- **Pinch Points** – These exist when two parts move together, with at least one turning in a circle.  
**Examples are:** Chain drives, belt drives, gear drives and feeder rolls. Clothing can be easily caught and drawn into a pinch point. Fingers, hands and other parts of the body are susceptible to pinch points and can easily be severed if we aren't careful and remain focused.
- **Pull in accidents** – These accidents happen when a person is unclogging or feeding a machine by hand while it is operating - Feed rolls or other components are too fast. They can pull you in so fast and mangle you before you can react and let go.

**PROTECT YOUR HANDS –  
YOU'LL NEED THEM TO PICK UP YOUR  
PAYCHECK!**

- **Wrap points** – This type of hazard exists where there is an exposed, rotating shaft. Once fabric, hair or similar materials get caught, there is no escape. Important wrapping hazards include:
  - ~Shaft ends which protrude beyond the bearings.
  - ~Splined, square and hex-shaped shafts are most likely to wrap hair and clothing, but the smoothest shaft can grab and wrap
  - ~Couplings, u-joints, keys and other types of fasteners increase the wrapping hazard.
  - ~Exposed beaters and pickup reels are also a wrapping threat.
- **Shear points** – These exist where the edges of two components move across each other, like scissors. Shearing and cutting devices are widely used in harvesting equipment.
- **Thrown objects** – Farm machines can propel objects great distances with a lot of force. Rotary mowers, flail mowers and other similar devices can throw objects with projectile forces.
- **Freewheeling** – Many types of farm machines have parts that will “run down” after the engine is shut down. An impatient person may try to reach in to unclog or service the equipment before the freewheeling equipment completely stops.
- **Crush points** – These are created when two objects move toward each other or when object moves against a stationary object. A crush point exists between an implement tongue and a tractor drawbar. Other potential crush point hazards are overhead doors, jacked up equipment, and raised hydraulic components.

## RECOGNITION - AVOIDANCE - PREVENTION:

- **Develop good safety habits to ensure that you have no contact with operating machinery.**
- **Never reach into any part of an operating machine. Always disengage the power, shut down the engine, take out the key, and wait for all parts to stop moving before attempting to service or unplug equipment.**
- **Make sure that all guards and shields are in place and are in good repair.**
- **When hitching equipment, the helper should stand clear of the tractor until it is backed into position. Inch the tractor forward, never backward, to make positioning adjustments.**
- **Keep bystanders away from areas where they might get hit by thrown objects.**