



MAFES Dawg Tracks

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Seven Common Causes of Accidents



Agriculture ranks among the most hazardous industries. Farmers are at a high risk for fatal and non-fatal injuries:

- ✓ In 2009, there were approximately 1,783,000 full-time workers employed in production agriculture in the USA. During this same year, 440 farmers and farmworkers died from a work-related injury for a fatality rate of 24.7 deaths per 100,000 workers.
- ✓ Between 1992 and 2009, 9,003 farmers and farm workers died from work-related injuries in the USA. The leading cause of death for these workers was tractor overturns, accounting for over 90 deaths per year.
- ✓ Every day, about 243 agricultural workers suffer lost-work time injury. 5% of these injuries result in permanent impairment.

The facts above “drive home” just how dangerous agriculture work can be and how it can affect families throughout our country. There are other causes of accidents, some not directly related to agriculture, but they could be if we don’t remain focused while we are performing our daily work.

Accidents occur for many reasons. In many industries people tend to look for “things” to blame when an accident happens, because it’s easier than looking for “root causes.” These causes, which we will discuss, can be eliminated if we look at them and try to correct them.

- **Taking Shortcuts** – Every day we make decisions we hope will make the job faster and more efficient. Short cuts that reduce your level of safety on the job aren’t shortcuts, but can increase your chances for an injury.
- **Being Over Confident** – Confidence is a good thing. Over confidence is too much of a good thing. Over confidence usually carries the adage of “It’ll never happen to me.” This attitude can lead to improper procedures, tools, or methods of work. Any of these items can lead or cause an injury.
- **Starting a job with Incomplete Instructions-** To do any job safely and correctly, you must be thoroughly familiar with the manufacturer’s instructions to perform acceptable work and maintain your safety. If you don’t fully understand the instructions, don’t hesitate. Ask to be sure.

- **Poor Housekeeping** – Anytime that there are guests visiting our stations, whether they are from other universities or department heads from our own university or supply companies, our housekeeping is a strong indicator of our attitude about quality of work, safety issues and the general esthetics of our station. Poor housekeeping creates all types of hazards, but it also tells how we feel about where we work and the impression that others will get. A well maintained station sets the standard for others to try to attain. **Good housekeeping involves both pride and safety.**
- **Ignoring Safety Procedures** – Purposely failing to follow safety guidelines and procedures endangers the livelihood of all employees. There are safety rules to follow. Practice them and you and other workers reduce the potential for injury. Neglect them or try to make up your own rules – you and possibly other employees become a potential casualty, looking for a place to happen.
- **Mental Distractions from Work** – Having a bad day at home, or other negative situations that can cause you to be distracted at work, is dangerous for you and other employees. Dropping your “mental “guard pulls your focus away from your safe work procedures. You can also become distracted by a friend coming to talk to you while you’re working. Both of these situations can cause you to become a statistic, if you don’t remain focused on the job at hand.
- **Failure to Plan** – A good trait to develop early on in any job, especially in our work, is to pre-plan the job. Take a little time before you start a project, look at the steps needed to perform the job and consider the safety features and allowed time to complete it. Starting a job or project in a hurry or without some thinking about how you need to proceed can result in an accident or incident. Instead-“**Plan Your Work-Work Your Plan.**”

A statistic to consider is: 80 out of every 100 accidents are the fault of the person involved in the incident. Unsafe Acts cause 4 times as many accidents as unsafe conditions.

**STILL WATER DOESN'T ALWAYS
RUN DEEP!
LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP!**

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BETTER SAFE THAN SORRY!