

# MAFES Dawg Tracks

August 19, 2013



Recognizing Common Farm  
Equipment Hazards



It takes many types of machines and equipment to handle a farming operation today. All of us are familiar with the hazards of farm equipment and the results that can occur if we aren't focused on staying safe while working.

## BEWARE OF THE DANGERS-

When operating any type of farm equipment, there is always the threat of being in "harm's way," which means there is a strong possibility of having a serious accident and losing your limb or life. Reviewing some of these known hazards might help to give us a "heads up" to keep us focused as we approach the planting season. Preventing accidents depends on:

- ✓ Knowledge of hazards.
- ✓ Keeping all guards and shields in place and well maintained.
- ✓ Heeding the warnings spelled out on the various decals affixed to the equipment.
- ✓ Always disengage the power, shut off the engine, pocket the key and wait for all moving parts to stop before doing any kind of work on the machine.

## RECOGNIZING COMMON EQUIPMENT HAZARDS-

It takes a multitude of different types of machines and implements to operate a farm in today's farming operations. The major farm equipment hazards are common to most all makes and models.

Farm workers need to learn to recognize these various hazards and take action to avoid accidental contact with them:

- **Pinch Points-** This action occurs when 2 parts move together with at least one of them moving in a circle. Some examples of this are chain drives, belt drives, gear drives and feeder rolls. Clothing, long hair, loose jewelry can get caught and drawn into a pinch point. Never reach into an area with a rotating part. Pinch points can easily sever a finger, hand or other body parts. Employees should keep long hair pulled back to avoid getting it caught in a rotating part. They should leave their jewelry at home or at least leave it off when working around pinch points.
- **Pull-in Accidents-** These accidents happen when a person tries to unclog or feed material by hand into an operating machine. The feed rolls are just simply too fast. They can pull you in and mangle your body parts or even your body in a matter of seconds.
- **Wrap Points-** These points exist wherever there is an exposed, rotating shaft. Once material is caught in a rotating shaft, there is no way to escape. Wrapping hazards that you should be aware of are:
  - ~Shaft ends protruding beyond bearings.
  - ~Splinted, square and hex-shaped shafts are most likely to wrap hair or clothing. However, the smoothest rotating shaft can wrap and grab.
  - ~Exposed beaters and pickup reels are also a wrapping threat.

~Couplings, u-joints, enough to cut relatively soft material. Shearing and cutting devices are widely used on harvesting equipment. The active parts may rotate like a rotary mower or reciprocate like a sickle bar. Cutting and shear points also exist on several devices that are not designed to cut material. Relate this to an auger when it moves into a tube or the tailgate of a large hay baling machine.

- **Shear points** – These exist where the edges of two components move across each other (like scissors). A cutting point is created when an object moves forcefully enough to cut relatively soft material. Shearing and cutting devices are widely used on harvesting equipment. The active parts may rotate like a rotary mower or reciprocate like a sickle bar. Cutting and shear points also exist on several devices that are not designed to cut material. Relate this to an auger when it moves into a tube or the tail gate of a large hay bale machine.
- **Thrown Objects** – Some farm machines, like rotary mowers or flail choppers, can throw objects a long distance with tremendous force. Combine straw choppers and hammer mills can sling kernels and other crop debris a considerable distance with a lot of force.
- **Free-wheeling** – Parts can continue to rotate for several minutes after the motor has been shut down. Some examples of these parts are: Forage harvester cutter heads, hammer mills, baler flywheels, rotary mowers and blower fans. Injury usually occurs when an impatient operator reaches in to unclog or service the equipment before the freewheeling part has stopped moving.
- **Crush Points** – Crush points are created when two objects move toward each other, or when one object moves toward a stationary item. A crush point exists between an implement tongue and the tractor drawbar. Some other examples of potential crush points could be shop or garage doors, raised hydraulic components or jacked-up equipment.

## RECOGNITION-AVOIDANCE-PREVENTION-

- **First off, to prevent farm equipment accidents, learn to recognize the hazards that these machines present.**
- **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 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.**

**IT'S BETTER TO LOSE ONE MINUTE IN LIFE  
\*\*\* THAN \*\*\*  
TO LOSE LIFE IN A MINUTE!!!**

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt.../ Loss Control Mgr.  
MSU-ES / MAFES 662-566-2201  
Excerpts: [www.nasdonline.gov](http://www.nasdonline.gov)  
3/4/2013