



MAFES Dawg Tracks

August 26, 2013



General Tractor
Safety



Technology has progressed light years with new implements, high performing tractors increasing productivity and saving countless hours of time. However, with this modernization in technology and labor-saving implements, the risk or hazards with the equipment has increased. The National Safety Council (NSC) statistics indicate that tractor overturns accounted for an average of 51% of tractor-related fatalities from 1985-1995, with an annual rate of 5.4 deaths per/100,000 tractors.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) issued the following regulations regarding Rollover Protective Structures. "Agricultural tractors manufactured after October 25, 1976 will meet the following requirements":

- ✓ A rollover Protective Structure (ROPS) shall be provided by the employer for each tractor operated by an employee.
- ✓ Where ROPS are required by this section, the employee shall:
 - a. Provide each tractor with a seat belt that meets requirements of SAE standard J4C.
 - b. Ensure that each employee uses the seat belt and tightens the belt sufficiently to confine the employee.

EXEMPTIONS-

- Low profile tractors used in orchards, vineyards or hop yards where the vertical clearance requirements substantially interfere with normal operations and is incidental to the work performed.
- Low profile tractors used in greenhouses or inside farm buildings in which the vertical clearance is sufficient to allow a ROPS equipped tractor to operate, and their use is incidental to the work performed.
- Tractors used with mounted equipment that is incompatible with ROPS, such as corn pickers, cotton strippers, and vegetable pickers and fruit harvesters.

GUIDELINES FOR SAFE OPERATION-

- **Be sure that the tractor is properly serviced and maintained.** Only check the radiator when the engine is cold or if you have to when it is hot – *Be Careful!*
- **Never refuel a tractor when the engine is running.** To reduce the chance of static electricity, ground the tractor with or by dropping mounted equipment so that it contacts the ground.
- **Always fuel the tractor outside and store the fuel inside.** Store fuels at least 40 feet from buildings. Keep the areas free of weeds or other burnable materials.
- **Carry a first aid kit and an approved dry chemical extinguisher (at least a 5 lb.) on the tractor.**
- **Be sure to have adequate ventilation before starting the engine.** Exhaust gases contain carbon monoxide, which is odorless, colorless and deadly.

- **“ONE SEAT-ONE-RIDER!”** This should be the motto for all tractors. Tractors are made for one person- the operator or driver. People should not be allowed to ride on trailing equipment as well.
- **Keep wheels spread apart as much as possible.** Wheels mounted in close stand a much better chance of causing a rollover. If the wheels have to be in close- the driver should take extra caution, especially running at high speeds.
- **Reduce your speed when turning.** Doubling the speed of a farm tractor quadruples the danger of upsetting sideways. Centrifugal force tries to keep the tractor in a straight line. If you try to turn the tractor at a high speed, it will attempt to stay straight instead of turn.
- **Reduce the speed with a loader.** Carrying a load in the raised position increases to potential for a turnover. Keep the bucket as close to the ground with a load as possible. Beware of rocks, ditches and holes that might cause a tractor to overturn.
- **Stop the engine before dismounting the tractor.** Drivers or operators have been killed by a tractor when the driver leaves the seat with the brakes locked, in gear or in park.
- **Never hitch to the axle or other high points.** Always hitch to the drawbar, take up slack slowly, and never jerk on chains or cables. Broken parts can react like shrapnel and broken cables can cut your legs out from under you. Tractors can also upset backwards when pushing or using a front end loader. Keep the hitch as low as possible, preferable at 17 inches and never more than 21 inches.
- **Be careful when driving up an incline.** If it is real steep back up the incline. If you get caught on a steep incline, back down slowly, using the brakes ever so lightly.
- **Keep the tractor in gear when going down a hill.** This allows the tractor to serve as a brake. Be sure that this type of transmission is put into direct drive before attempting to use the engine as a brake.
- **Disengage the power takeoff when not in use.** Use the power shield whenever the equipment is in use. If you do not have a PTO-get one or make one-it could save your life.
- **Do not use the tractor for jobs that it wasn't designed for and don't overload it with jobs that tax the size of the tractor.**
- **Refrain from attaching posts to the back wheels when stuck in the mud.** If the wheels aren't free to turn, it could cause the tractor to pivot around the axle and upset. Try to back out, if this doesn't work, get another tractor to help.
- **Obey all traffic rules on the road, including proper lighting, rights of way, proper hand signals, etc.** Tractors should stay off interstate highways.

***SAFETY DOESN'T SLOW THE
JOB DOWN -
BUT
MISHAPS DO!!***