

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



September 2, 2013



**Safety Tips:**  
**Corn Harvest Safety**

Corn Harvest is here or will be shortly! Time means money when it comes to yields, production schedules, and operating costs. Time also ensures safety at harvest time. The extra time that it takes to perform the harvest properly can determine whether the job is completed at all.

Harvest time can be a dangerous time. The Iowa Department of Health reported that in 1996, there were 800 reported injuries from farm machinery, tractors and falls. 47% of these occurred in August, September, October, and November. These injuries, regardless of where they occur can be attributed to:

- ✓ Taking shortcuts in an attempt to finish faster.
- ✓ Lack of proper rest and/or sleep.
- ✓ Failing to follow proper safety practices.

Following are some safety tips that will be of good use, if they are read and followed before the corn harvest season starts.

- Allow sufficient time to complete the project without having to rush or taking shortcuts that will put you into “harm’s way.”
- Stay alert! This involves sufficient rest at night, avoiding medications or other substances that will hinder your efficiency at operating the harvesters.
- When you leave the combine-shut off the engine and always remove the key and take it with you.
- Read and get totally familiar with the manufacturer’s instructions – pay special to all the safety statements.
- Before you start a harvest project – check the surrounding area for bystanders, animals or other obstacles that might interfere with your work.
- As with all motorized equipment, the “**ONE SEAT-ONE RIDER**” policy is always in effect unless the equipment is equipped with a “buddy” seat for training an operator.

## **SERVICE AND MAINTENANCE TIPS-**

- Use the off-season profitably to repair and service all the equipment, so when the harvest is ready, the equipment will be too.
- Before you start to service the machine, lower the head to the ground, put it into park or neutral, set the brake, turn off the engine, and remove the key.
- Do not attempt to clear a clogged harvester when the engine is running.
- Allow the harvester knives to stop rotating before opening the access doors to work on them. Lockout devices should be used, which prevents an accidental startup and will serve to help offset the potential for serious injury.

- Follow the specifications when sharpening the knives or replacing them, forage blades, or combine cylinder bars. Be sure to torque the knife, blade, or bar attachment bolts to the manufacturer’s specifications.
- Don’t place yourself behind or beneath the header without knowing that they can’t come down. Use the manufacturer’s hydraulic stops, solid blocks, or other fail safe devices.

## **FIRE AND FALL PREVENTION TIPS-**

### **Reduce fire hazards by:**

- Keeping all belts tight.
- Keep dust, debris and chaff buildups clear.
- Check bearings regularly.
- Each harvester should be equipped with at least 1- 10 lb. Type ABC fire extinguisher. A type A will cover brush, chaff or debris. The ABC will cover any type of fire you will encounter on the corn harvester. It is a good management practice to mount these fire extinguishers on the outside of the cab. Many of our extinguishers are mounted on the inside, but outside is more accessible. If you really want to be compliant and safe, have a 2.5 or 5.0 gallon water extinguisher or pump along with the fire extinguishers.
- Keep the ladders clear of mud and debris. Operators should wear good shoes or boots with slip resistant soles to enhance their safety when climbing or descending the equipment ladders. Also clean ladders reduce the potential for a slip and fall hazard, which is one of the leading causes of accidents in the agriculture industry.

## **ROAD SAFETY-**

- ✓ Make the machine as narrow as possible by folding in the augers, adjusting the hitches and removing the headers.
- ✓ Make sure you have a clean, legible Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) sign on the tractor and implements.
- ✓ Use warning lights where possible and signal at all turns.
- ✓ Avoid driving on the shoulder of the road, where the ground is probably rough and uneven. It can cause a tip over. Drive on the pavement as much as possible, and when you come to a wide place in the highway, like a drive way, pull off the pavement and let the traffic pass.
- ✓ When ascending or descending hills, do so in a mid-range or low gear. Do not descend or ascend with the machine in high gear or neutral.
- ✓ A safe and reasonable suggestion is to have an escort on the highway when changing fields.

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**LEAD THE WAY WITH  
SAFETY TODAY!!**

**ALERT TODAY  
TOMORROW**

**ALIVE**