

# MAFES Dawg Tracks



October 13, 2014



*Safety Tips: Safe Pulling  
- Don't Get Stuck in the  
Mud*

After heavy rains and local flooding, tractor equipment may get stuck in the mud. If this is the case, extra precautions should be taken when you're attempting to free the vehicle or remove from the mud bog.

Following are some safety tips for towing your vehicles out of precarious situations:

## **TRY TO BACK OUT-**

- ✓ Before attempting to pull out a stuck tractor, unhook the equipment from the tractor.
- ✓ Pull the unhooked equipment out of the way and try to back the tractor out. If this doesn't work, then try to pull it out backwards.
- ✓ If the implements can't be disconnected and pulled away, then try pulling the whole rig, implement and all, out backwards.
- ✓ You may find that using 2 tractors to pull out the stuck tractor and the implement are necessary.
- ✓ Pulling the equipment out backwards reduces the chance of a tractor rollover.

## **SELECT A PROPER TOWING DEVICE-**

- ✓ Don't grab the first rope, chain or cable that you might find in the shop.
- ✓ The towing device will be put under a lot of pulling tension or stress. Be sure that it is adequate for the towing job that is facing you.
- ✓ Consider the terrain, soil and surface conditions when you are selecting a towing device.
- ✓ If the towing device breaks, depending upon the material, such as a hook on a chain, it suddenly becomes a projectile. Depending upon the destination of the flying hook, it can hit an object or a person, causing critical damage.
- ✓ A 1-inch rope has a greater breaking strength than a chain or cable, but when it breaks it retracts back to the point of attachment. Steel cables, when they break will fly in an unpredictable manner and wrap around the first object it comes in contact with. A long towing chain is the most favorable device to use. They break at their weakest point so the welds and hooks should be checked each time that you might need them for towing.

## **ATTACH TOWING DEVICE TO THE PULLING VEHICLE PROPERLY-**

- ✓ If you are pulling with a tractor, it is important to hook the device to the drawbar.
- ✓ Improperly hitching to anything but the drawbar increases your chances of a rear end overturn.
- ✓ Truck bumpers shouldn't be used, as the bumper could fall off and become a projectile.
- ✓ As mentioned above, 2 vehicles may be required to complete the towing job. If this is the case, each vehicle should be attached with separate towing devices.

- ✓ Attaching them in a single file puts too much stress on the towing device between the second tractor and the stuck piece of machinery.
- ✓ It would be a good idea to refer to the owner's manual for other towing ideas.

## **CLEAR THE AREA OF UNNECESSARY BYSTANDERS-**

- ✓ Before you start to pull out the machinery, clear the area of unnecessary bystanders and other employees.
- ✓ Ask these individuals to leave the area for their safety and protection.

## **INITIATE THE TOWING PROCESS SAFELY-**

- ✓ Double-check all the attachments to make sure that they are secure.
- ✓ If you are using more than one vehicle, be sure to coordinate all the efforts with the other employees.
- ✓ When you start the towing process, apply the power smoothly and not with jerking motions.
- ✓ At the first indication of a sign of danger, stop the pulling where you are and check out the problem, mitigate it and continue on.
- ✓ The safest way to pull out a stuck machine is to always use the best proper pulling equipment - apply it slowly and smoothly.

## **4 WAYS TO PULL A TRUCK FROM THE MUD:-**

### **ROCK IT OUT-**

- As soon as your truck bogs down, the first thing you should do is put it in reverse and rock it back and forth, keep your wheels straight and gradually accelerate in an effort to get back where you started from- solid ground.
- If the truck has 4-wheel drive, lock it in and shoot the truck straight ahead. If the truck bogs down after going only a short distance in reverse, shift into low gear and power forward as far as you can. Keep up this procedure until you can see that you are progressing.

### **ADD TRACTION-**

- Place solid, dry objects beneath the wheels in the direction that you want to go (forward or reverse).
- Some folks have used floor mats for traction, but rocks, limbs and boards do a better job.
- You may also lower tire pressure, allowing the tires to lay flatter on the ground, which will create more traction.

### **WINCH IT OUT-**

- If you plan to drive through mud on a regular basis, it is a good idea to purchase a winch.

### **PULL IT OUT-**

- Refer to the left (pulling vehicles out properly).
- Attach your towing device (a webbed recovery strap is good) to the tow hitches or frame mounted tow hooks. Do not hook up to the bumper, axles or hitch balls for obvious reasons.

**UNSAFE ACTS WILL  
KEEP YOU IN STITCHES!**



**SAFETY IS YOU!!**

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control Mgr.  
MAFES / MSU-ES (662) 566-2201 6/6/2014

Excerpts: [www.agsafety.psu.edu](http://www.agsafety.psu.edu)  
<http://blog.allstate.com>