

MAFES Dawg Tracks



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*Safety Tips: Combine
Harvester Safety*



The time is almost here for the roar and sight of combines getting in high gear for the fall harvest. Reminders of maintaining a safe environment around all types of farm equipment is always good to remember. The safety conscious combine operator is the key to a successful and safely operating combine. The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) investigated, in the period of 1996 through 2,000, 60 combine-related incidents.

Following are the results of their investigation:

- ✓ 10 deaths and 40 injuries
- ✓ 6 deaths were results of run overs by the combine
- ✓ 4 deaths and 14 serious injuries were from clearing blockages or working on the running combine
- ✓ 15 injuries were from slips, trips and falls from the combine

Identification of the risks involved and precautions to reduce these risks need to be put in place. **Safe Stop** is the most important safety action of all precautions:

- Handbrake on
- Controls in neutral
- Stop engine
- Remove the ignition key before entering the grain tank
- Working behind, inside or under the combiner

COMBINE SAFETY HAZARDS-

Many fatal and serious injuries occur when operators are pulled into the machine at the reel/header unit. The greatest risk of injury comes from contact with the machine's moving parts including:

- Being pulled into the cutting mechanism.
- Contacting the knife, reel or stripper rotor.
- Being injured by the drive mechanisms or trapped when automatic sensors operate.
- Becoming entangled with the leveling or discharge augers in the grain tank.
- Contacting the straw chopper or spreader mechanism at the rear.

OTHER RISKS CREATED BY WORKING WITH A COMBINE-

- Contacting overhead electric power lines.
- Being run over, trapped under the header or injured by header falling from its transport trailer.
- Falling off the combine, especially during pre/post season cleaning, maintenance or re-fueling.
- Fires
- Noise

SAFE WORKING TIPS-

- ✓ Check to see that all guards and shields are in place and functional. Do remove any of these.

- ✓ Make sure that all the employees involved with combine operations are properly trained in all the areas of use.
- ✓ "One Seat-One Rider," is always in effect, unless there is a second seat in the cab. Do not mount or dismount the machine while it is moving. Children under the age of 13 years should not be allowed on a combine,
- ✓ Make sure you keep reversing mirrors clean and well adjusted.
- ✓ Combines, being large bulky machines, makes rear vision hard. The driver should take extra precaution when reversing. Sound your horn repeatedly, to alert bystanders or workers involved that you are reversing.
- ✓ Keep in mind the hazards posed by straw choppers and spreaders- remember to allow the engine to run down before approaching the rear of the combine.
- ✓ Make sure that there are no bystanders around before you start your descent in the combine.
- ✓ Be sure to plan and consider your move and movement to implement a safe transport of the machine and loading and unloading the header.
- ✓ Keep the cab door shut to keep out dust and noise.
- ✓ Make sure that the operators are appraised of the potential risks, safe operating procedures; and that they have a copy of the owner's manual on the machine.
- ✓ Use any grain sampling mechanism provided.
- ✓ Be careful on slopes, avoid sudden changes in direction and always park on flat ground when possible.

CLEARING BLOCKAGES-

- ✓ Do not attempt to reach into the header with an arm or leg, attempt to clear a blockage or climb or reach into the grain tank unless you use the **SAFE STOP** procedure.
- ✓ Develop a safe system for doing any type of work on the combine. A good idea is to write these tips down and use them as part of your employee safety policy.
- ✓ Follow the procedures listed in the owner's manual for safe operation, maintenance and dealing with blockages and other problems.
- ✓ Use your instruments - watch and listen for potential blockages. Avoiding blockages is easier than contending with them.
- ✓ Be patient when working with difficult crop conditions such as unfamiliar crops or fibrous crops, like linseed.
- ✓ Reversing drive mechanisms, when fitted, can wind out blockages.
- ✓ Do not operate the machine beyond its capability. **In other words, don't overload it.**

Following these tips will greatly enhance your harvest experience, reducing the potential for injury, and will improve the overall harvest expense.

**AVOID ACCIDENTS -
PAY ATTENTION
TO THE REGULATIONS!!**