

# MAFES Dawg Tracks

June 27, 2016



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™  
MS AGRICULTURAL AND  
FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

*Safety Tips –  
Avoid Horseplay*

Horseplay is rough, and rowdy play and pranks occur in the workplace or in other environments. It can be grabbing, racing, and foolish play involving vehicles, mental harassment, or just plain physical contact. In some instances acts of horseplay will go unnoticed. However, noticed or unnoticed, ultimately they may lead to injuries to the innocent victim involved. The incidents can cause divisive personalities or preventing an employee from completing their jobs. Some states have laws for prosecuting horseplay incidents where an individual received an injury.

## **Horseplay and Fooling around are the Opposite of Safe, Responsible Work** – According to the dictionary:

- ✓ Horseplay means rough fun.
- ✓ Fooling around means doing foolish, useless things.
- ✓ A fool is a person with little or no judgment or common sense.

**Workplace Rules Ban Horseplay Because It's Dangerous-**  
Horseplay is usually a friendly, physical way to let off steam. But that type of fooling around is dangerous on the job because:

- ✓ When you're fooling around, you aren't concentrating on your work.
- ✓ Directing your horseplay at others is even more dangerous. They aren't expecting the distraction and could easily have an accident such as falling into a moving piece of equipment, slipping on the floor or deck of a machine, dropping a tool, etc.
- ✓ Not giving your full attention or concentration to safety procedures makes you less likely to notice or account for hazards until it may be too late.
- ✓ Most accidents are caused by unsafe acts – horseplay is an unsafe act!

## **Horseplay Creates Unnecessary Risks-**

You can prevent most workplace accidents by being alert to hazards and following safety rules. You can't do either when you indulge in horseplay. Horseplay may create risk such as:

- Running, chasing, or pushing causes slips, trips, or falls and other accidents.
- Not noticing spills or items laying on the floor.
- Lose your footing.
- Crash into, or push someone else into, heavy equipment or moving parts.
- Lose your footing.
- Knock boxes or other materials into another person.
- Knock open containers of hazardous substances.

## **Throwing tools is a frequent cause of injuries. They may:**

- ✓ Stab someone with a sharp edge.
- ✓ Hit someone in the head, eye, foot, etc. and cause an injury.
- ✓ Bounce off a wall, table, or other surface and hit someone.
- ✓ Fall from a height and hit a person below with a tremendous impact.

## **Fooling around with personal protective equipment (PPE) can damage it and expose you or another worker to a hazardous substance:**

- ✓ Speeding with a forklift, ATV, or UTV can cause it to tip or roll over or hit a person or possibly objects, possibly injuring the driver or a bystander.
- ✓ Climbing on or under forklift forks can cause you to get crushed or pushed. It's against the law.
- ✓ Pushing, teasing, or otherwise distracting people working with machinery could cause pinch point or other injuries.
- ✓ Practical jokes, like hiding someone's PPE, dropping your part of a load, or turning out lights are not funny- they're dangerous.

## **Take your Job, Responsibilities, and Safety Seriously-**

You are responsible for performing your job safely.

- Safety rules and procedures are designed to protect you.
- Everyone should follow the safety rules. Failure to do so could result in an injury to you or other employees.
- Horseplay and safety rule violations could result in a disciplinary procedure.
- Refrain from horseplay and discourage those who attempt to badger others who don't enter into acts of horseplay.
- Be a good leader by discouraging those individuals that attempt to get involved in acts of horseplay.

*LEAVE THE HORSEPLAY  
TO THE HORSES!!*

*<><><><><><><><>*

*DON'T WORK ALONE  
WATCH FOR OTHERS*

Ted Gordon – Risk Mgmt./Loss Control Mgr.  
MAFES / MSU-ES 662-566-2201

Excepts: <http://www.fs.illinois.edu/services/safety-and-compliance>

1/8/2015