
HOW TO USE TAILGATE TALKS

Tailgate Talks are tools used to deliver short 10 – 15 minute hands-on awareness sessions to support your workplace training programs. They address specific hazards and are focussed in nature. The intent of these tools is to provide workers with information on the hazards in their job and ways for them to be safe. They do not replace any component of the employer's health and safety training program. The Seguridad Agrícola Tailgate Talks cover the following information:

- Agricultural/Industrial Mower Safety
- Dangers of Heat Stress
- Eye Protection
- Farm Machinery Safety on Public Roads
- General Housekeeping in the Workplace
- Power Take-Off Safety
- Prevent Tractor Overturns
- Protect Your Hearing
- Protect Yourself From the Sun
- Recognizing Common Farm Equipment Hazards
- Respiratory Hazards in Agriculture
- Safe Handling of Farm Animals
- Safe Lifting and Carrying Techniques
- Skid Steer Safety
- Slips, Trips and Falls
- WHMIS – Workplace Hazardous Material Information System

Each topic is designed as a quick 15-minute awareness session which can be presented at the start of a shift. This information encourages open discussion, provides key prevention strategies and interactive opportunities. You may deliver all topics over time or select the topics that are relevant to your workplace.

HOW TO USE TAILGATE TALKS

For each topic that you deliver ensure you have any safety equipment needed to demonstrate the information in the safety topic. Each Tailgate Talk information sheet includes points to emphasize which you should ensure are covered.

When delivering your Tailgate Talk, consider the following suggestions:

1. Identify the priority topics for your farm from the list of topics.
2. Plan your weekly or daily safety tailgate talk sessions. Choose topics that are relevant to the work being done.
3. Read the information sheet before you deliver the talk so you are acquainted and comfortable with the material. Determine if any equipment is needed. Make sure you are familiar with any company rules related to the topic.
4. Deliver the talk where it is most appropriate. It may be in the field, or near the tools and equipment you are talking about.
5. When possible use real tools, equipment, material or locations to demonstrate your points.
6. Allow time at the end the talk for questions and suggestions. Us the "Notes" section on each tailgate talk to record any questions or suggestions that you may wish to incorporate into future sessions.
7. For future reference, keep records of the meeting, who attended and the topic delivered.

TAILGATE TALKS

AGRICULTURAL/INDUSTRIAL MOWER SAFETY

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Operators need to be thoroughly familiar with mowing equipment, its operating characteristics, capacity and safety features. Learn which materials the mower you are using can safely cut.
- ✓ Work sites need to be prepared in advance. Remove obstacles from the work site before starting to mow.
- ✓ Operators are responsible for their personal safety and that of others. Wear safety footwear and other protective gear. Ensure all guards and shields are in place.
- ✓ Ensure children, animals or bystanders are not in the work area.

Know your machine

Safe use of agricultural and industrial mowers depends on understanding each machine's capacity and operating characteristics. For example, you need to find out which materials a particular unit can cut safely.

Study the operator's manual in detail before starting to use equipment. You must know how to use the mower, tractor, and various accessories. Determine the purpose of all the controls, gauges, and dials. Learn the safe speed, slope capabilities, braking and steering characteristics, turning radius, and operating clearances.

Confirm that all guards, shields, and safety signs recommended by the manufacturer are installed. Study the danger, warning, and caution decals affixed to the machine.

Prepare the work area

Look for any condition that might be hazardous: ditches, potholes, drop-offs, steep slopes, stumps, etc. Remove any objects which could be thrown by the mower. Remember that obstacles are harder to see in tall grass, weeds, or brush. Check for overhead clearance when operating boom or wing-type mowers.

TAILGATE TALKS – AGRICULTURAL/INDUSTRIAL MOWER SAFETY

Determine the best and safest way to proceed with cutting. Consider the height and type of material to be mowed, and the terrain over which you must operate. Plan a pattern that will allow you to travel straight forward as much as possible.

Protect yourself

Steel-toed safety footwear is mandatory. Full length, close-fitting clothes should be worn. A hat, safety eyewear, hearing protection, and gloves are recommended equipment for this type of work.

Watch out for others

Under no circumstances should children or pets be anywhere near the work area-NO RIDERS!

If anyone comes near the area while you are mowing, shut off the equipment.

Safe mowing practices

1. Be sure the transmission is out of gear and the mower blade clutch disengaged before starting the engine.
2. Engage the mower drive at low engine RPM and the equipment at maximum cutting height. Check for excessive vibration and unusual noises. If there is any indication of trouble, shut the machine down and carry out an inspection. Mower blades may continue to rotate for some time, so wait until all movement has stopped before leaving the tractor seat. Block the raised mower before inspection.
3. Raise speed to rated RPM, and lower the mower to the desired working height.
4. Proper ground speed will depend on the height, type and density of material to be cut, and the nature of the terrain.
5. Slow down on slopes and when turning sharply to avoid a rollover. Be alert for holes or other hidden dangers.
6. With under mount, rear mount, pull-type, and wing mowers, always try to mow down slopes, never up or across the face.
7. With side mount, offset, and sicklebar mowers, always mow across the slope with the mower on the uphill side. Never operate with the mower pointed downhill. Avoid turning uphill quickly or sharply with this class of mowers.

TAILGATE TALKS – AGRICULTURAL/INDUSTRIAL MOWER SAFETY

8. Use extreme caution when operating on very uneven terrain.
9. Extreme caution is required when mowing ditch banks.
10. Do not mow in reverse unless specifically recommended in the operator's manual. Always look behind before backing up.
11. Keep feet and hands away from v-belts, shafts, and other moving parts. The mower should not be running unless the operator is sitting on the seat.
12. Follow recommended shutdown procedures before leaving the mower. Set the brakes, disengage power to the mower, turn off the engine, and remove the key. Never leave a mower on a slope.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

DANGERS OF HEAT STRESS

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Drink plenty of water to keep body fluid levels up.
- ✓ Get out of the heat occasionally and take breaks in cool, shady areas.
- ✓ Be alert to early warnings of heat stress, both in yourself and in your co-workers. Take action.

Heat stress needs to be taken seriously

Working in a hot environment puts stress on the body's cooling system. When heat is combined with other stresses, like hard physical work, loss of fluids, or fatigue, it may lead to heat-related illness, disability, or even death!

The body is always generating heat and passing it to the environment. The harder you work the more heat your body has to lose. Heat leaves your body in several ways:

- Transfer from skin to air
- Evaporation by perspiration
- Exhaling hot air
- Touching a cool object

Water is crucial to helping the body adjust to high temperatures. The rate of water intake must equal the increased rate of water loss by perspiration to keep body temperature normal. **When it's hot, drink plenty of water!**

Your body must work even harder to get rid of excess heat when conditions are both hot and humid. Unfortunately, perspiration can't evaporate as readily under muggy conditions. The process is easier if the surrounding air is moving.

Sickness and accident rates increase when heavy work is done at temperatures above 30 degrees Celsius (86 degrees Fahrenheit).

TAILGATE TALKS – DANGERS OF HEAT STRESS

Don't push yourself beyond your limits. It could be harmful to your health, and could put you at increased risk of having an accident.

Heat stress hazards

Following are three common conditions that can result from the body overheating.

Heat cramps: Heavy sweating drains the body of salt, which cannot be replaced by simply drinking water. Painful cramps occur in the arms, legs, or stomach while on the job, or later at home. Move the person to a cool area at once if cramping is experienced. Loosen clothing and provide cool, nutrient replenishing fluids or water. Seek medical aid if the cramps are severe, or don't go away. Do not leave the person alone.

Heat exhaustion: Inadequate water and salt intake causes the body's cooling system to break down. Symptoms include heavy sweating, cool, moist skin, body temperature over 38 degrees Celsius (100 degrees Fahrenheit), weak pulse, and normal or low blood pressure. The victim is likely to be tired, weak, clumsy, upset, or confused. They will be very thirsty, and will pant or breathe rapidly. Their vision may be blurred. **Get medical help immediately!** Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke, which can kill. Move the person to a cool, shaded area. Loosen or remove excess clothing. Provide cool, nutrient replenishing fluids or water. Fan and spray the victim with cool water. Do not leave person alone.

Heat stroke can kill a person quickly! Once the body uses up all its water and salt, sweating ceases. Temperature can rise quickly. You can assume a person is suffering from heat stroke if their body temperature is over 41 degrees Celsius (105 degrees Fahrenheit), and any of the following symptoms are present:

- Weakness, confusion, distress, strange behaviour
- Hot, dry, red skin
- Rapid pulse
- Headache or dizziness
- In later stages of heat stroke, a victim may pass out and have convulsions

Call an ambulance immediately if heat stroke is suspected. The victim's life may be on the line! Until help arrives, move the victim to a cool area and remove excess clothing. Fan and spray them with cool water. Offer sips of water if the victim is conscious.

TAILGATE TALKS – DANGERS OF HEAT STRESS

Heat wave guidelines

The following measures should help prevent the development of heat-related illnesses.

1. Slow down in hot weather. Your body's temperature regulating system faces a much greater workload when temperature and humidity are high.
2. Heed early warnings of heat stress, such as headache, heavy perspiration, high pulse rate, and shallow breathing. Take a break immediately and get to a cooler location. **Watch for heat stress signs among your co-workers.**
3. Dress for hot weather. Lightweight, light-coloured clothing reflects heat.
4. **Drink plenty of water.**
5. Increase your salt intake, preferably by adding salt to your food. Consult your physician if you are on a salt-restricted diet.
6. Try to get used to warm weather gradually. Take it easy for those first two or three hot days. Your body will have a better chance to adjust if you take it slow
7. Get out of the heat occasionally. Physical stress increases with time in hot weather. Take breaks in a cool, shady location.
8. Don't try to get a suntan while you are working! It's harder for your internal cooling system to work through sunburned skin. Wear a hat and long-sleeved shirt to prevent sunburns.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

EYE PROTECTION

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Many farming activities carry the risk of eye damage. Never take your eyesight for granted.
- ✓ Always wear eye protection that is appropriate to the task at hand and if there is a chance of injury.
- ✓ When striking hardened tools and metal surfaces use goggles.
- ✓ Wear sunglasses if working outside.
- ✓ Wear eye protection if working in dusty environment.

Eyes are irreplaceable

The eyes are very sensitive. They need to be protected against impact, chemicals, dust, chaff, and numerous other farm workplace hazards.

Always wear eye protection when spray painting, grinding, drilling, welding, sawing, working in a dusty environment, or handling chemicals. Develop the habit of putting on safety glasses or goggles whenever you work with hand or power tools.

Several types of eye protection devices are available:

- **Safety Glasses:** Standard eye glasses and sunglasses provide frontal protection only. If you wear glasses, make sure they have impact resistant lenses. Safety glasses have heavier lenses that can withstand more shock than ordinary lenses.
- **Goggles:** Plastic goggles protect the eyes against front and side impact. Unvented or chemical splash goggles also offer protection against chemical vapours and liquids. Always wear goggles when striking hardened metal tools and hardened metal surfaces to protect eyes against flying metal chips.
- **Face Shields:** Face shields protect the face against splashing, dust, and chaff. However, standard designs offer very little protection against impact. If impact protection is needed, wear safety glasses or goggles under the face shield. Special impact-resistant shields are also available.

TAILGATE TALKS – EYE PROTECTION

Special protection needed when welding

The brilliance of a welding arc can permanently damage the naked eye. **Always wear a helmet when arc welding.** The eyes, face, and neck need protection against the burning rays of the arc, and from the splatter of molten metal and slag. To protect vision, make sure the welding helmet has a coloured lens with at least a No. 10 shade when welding with 200 amperes or less. Darker shades are needed when using higher currents. Consult your welder’s instruction manual.

Never strike a welding arc before your helmet is in place. Never look at an arc from any distance with naked eyes while someone else is welding.

Chipping slag

Never chip slag when your eyes (or those of others nearby) are not protected by goggles, an eye shield, or the clear lens of a welding helmet. If fragments of hot slag were to hit the eye, medical attention would be required for their removal, and blindness could result. The risk of permanent eye injury is so great that you should never chip slag from a weld without protecting your eyes.

Oxyacetylene welders

Don’t weld or use the cutting attachment unless you are wearing goggles. The lenses should be a No. 5 or 6 shade for welding and cutting, and a No. 3 or 4 shade for brazing.

Sun protection also important

In addition to increasing risk of skin cancer, prolonged exposure to the sun’s ultraviolet rays can be damaging to the eyes. Always wear sunglasses to protect your eyes while working outdoors.

Don’t take your eyesight for granted!

Loss or impairment of vision would severely restrict job opportunities and reduce your general enjoyment of life. Don’t take chances with your eyesight! Put those safety glasses on, even if you “just have to drill one hole.”

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

FARM MACHINERY SAFETY ON PUBLIC ROADS

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Check hitch connections, including safety chain. Secure towed equipment with locking hitch pin.
- ✓ Use Slow Moving Vehicle signs and proper lighting to make farm equipment highly visible.
- ✓ Check the condition of *all* tires before heading out.
- ✓ Lock brake pedals together for road travel.
- ✓ Slow down on curves, turns and when pulling heavy loads.

Know the dangers of highway travel

Moving farm equipment on public roads can be a dangerous business. Operators need to drive defensively and remain alert every second they are on the road.

A major reason for farm machinery accidents on public roads is the difference in speed between cars and tractors. Motorists approach the slow moving farm equipment so quickly that they only have a few seconds to identify the hazard and react appropriately.

That's why it is so important for farm equipment to be highly visible and properly identified as moving much slower than regular traffic. This identification is provided by the Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) sign. SMV signs must be kept clean. Faded and damaged signs should be replaced. SMV signs must be:

- Centred on the rear of the tractor or trailing equipment, between 60 cm (2 feet) and 2.0 metres (6 feet) above the road surface.
- Clearly visible from a distance of 150 metres (500 feet).

Tractors must be equipped with lights if operated on public roads at night, or under conditions of reduced visibility. Highway travel requires headlights, red tail lights, and reflectors. Flashing amber lights provide day and night warning to traffic approaching from either direction. Turn signals provide added highway safety. The equipment on the road should be as highly visible as possible.

TAILGATE TALKS – FARM MACHINERY SAFETY ON PUBLIC ROADS

Check everything *before* heading out

You need to perform a complete check of both the tractor and trailed equipment before heading for the road.

- Use safety-type hitch pins, and make sure they are securely fastened.
- A safety chain must extend from the tractor to the frame of the towed equipment.
- Check all tires (on both tractor and towed equipment) for air pressure, cuts and bumps.
- **Always** lock brake pedals together for highway travel. Sudden braking on one wheel only, at high speed, could put the tractor into a dangerous skid.
- Rear-view mirrors, flares, and fire extinguishers should be standard equipment for tractors that are frequently driven on public roads.
- Check that all lights are operating properly.
- Make sure that the SMV sign is clean, unfaded, and properly mounted.
- Check towed equipment. Any load should be balanced and properly secured. Make sure the towed load is light enough for the tractor to handle safely. Heavy wagons should be equipped with independent brakes.

Safe driving tips

Farm machinery operators can make road travel safer for themselves and others by taking the following precautions:

- Avoid busy roads whenever possible, even if travel time will be longer.
- Travel at a speed that will allow you to maintain full control at all times.
- Slow down when making turns or rounding curves.
- Observe road travel precautions listed in operator manuals. Some tractors free-wheel in higher gears. This can be very dangerous when coming down a hill. Use lower gear ranges when climbing or descending hills.
- If possible, drive on the shoulder of a paved highway. However, don't drive partly on the shoulder and partly on the paved lane.
- Stay alert for hazards such as soft shoulders, narrow bridges, loose gravel, bumps, potholes, and deep ruts.

TAILGATE TALKS – FARM MACHINERY SAFETY ON PUBLIC ROADS

- When cars are lined up behind you and a suitable shoulder is available, pull over to let traffic pass.
- If possible, move equipment in daylight during periods of light traffic. Travel after dark only if absolutely necessary. Remember that you need proper lighting for night driving.
- Don't take chances by pulling onto a road in front of moving traffic. If your view is obstructed enter and exit roadways very cautiously.
- Obey traffic laws and signs. **Courtesy is a key component of road safety!**

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING IN THE WORKPLACE

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Keep floors clean and clear of waste. Keep aisles and stairways free of clutter.
- ✓ Ensure emergency exits, fire equipment and first aid stations are not blocked.
- ✓ Keep workplaces adequately lit. Keep light fixtures clean and maintained.
- ✓ Inspect and clean machinery and tools regularly.
- ✓ Clean up spills immediately.

Effective housekeeping can eliminate some workplace hazards and help get a job done easily and properly. A good housekeeping program plans and manages the orderly storage and movement of materials from point of entry to exit. It includes a material flow plan to ensure minimal handling.

Worker training is an essential part of any good housekeeping program. They should be reporting any unusual conditions or hazards as well as obeying posted warning signs.

Finally it is important to conduct inspections. It is the only way to check for deficiencies in the program so that changes can be made.

Floors and other areas

- Floors should be free of debris and accumulations of dust. Areas that cannot be cleaned continuously, such as entranceways, should have anti-slip flooring.
- Replace any worn, ripped or damaged flooring that poses a tripping hazard. Repair all trap doors and railings. Any equipment or tools not in use should be removed from the work area.
- Guard floor openings. Trap doors, cages or railings around hay chutes will prevent anyone from accidentally falling into them.
- Cut down and remove weeds and brush from around buildings. They can hide tripping hazards.

TAILGATE TALKS – GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING IN THE WORKPLACE

Maintain light fixtures

- All buildings and yards should be adequately lit. Dirty light fixtures reduce light levels. Light fixtures in storage areas containing combustible materials should be protected against breaking (i.e. explosion proof fixtures).
- Maintain lighting evenly, since shadows mixed with light spots inside animal handling facilities will increase the animal's fear and tension.

Aisles and stairways

- Keep aisles and stairways clearly marked and clear of objects that can cause trips and falls. Stairways and aisles also require adequate lighting.
- Aisles should be wide enough to accommodate people and vehicles comfortably and safely. Warning signs and mirrors can improve sight lines at blind corners. Properly arranged aisles encourage people to use them so that they do not take “shortcuts” or “bottleneck” storage.

Spill control

- The best way to control spills is to stop them before they happen. Regularly cleaning and maintaining machines and equipment is one way to do this. Another is to use drip pans and guards where spills might occur.
- If a spill occurs, follow cleanup procedures as indicated on the Material Safety Data Sheet. Clean spills immediately. Absorbent material is useful for wiping up greasy, oily or other liquid spills. Used absorbents must be disposed of properly and safely.

Tools and equipment

- Keep tools neat and orderly, whether in the tool room, on the rack, in the yard, or on the bench. Return tools promptly after use reducing the chance of them being misplaced or lost.
- Workers should regularly inspect, clean and repair all tools and take any damaged or worn tools out of service.

Maintenance

- A good maintenance program includes inspection, maintenance, upkeep and repair of tools, equipment, machines and processes. Maintenance involves keeping buildings, equipment and machinery in safe efficient working order and in good repair. This includes maintaining sanitary facilities, regularly painting and cleaning walls, maintaining windows, damaged doors, defective plumbing and broken surfaces.

TAILGATE TALKS – GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING IN THE WORKPLACE

Waste disposal

- The regular collection, grading and sorting of scrap contributes to good housekeeping practices. Allowing materials to build up on the floor wastes time and energy since additional time is required for cleaning it up.
- Placing scrap containers near where the waste is produced encourages orderly waste disposal and makes collection easier. All waste receptacles should be clearly labelled. (e.g., recyclable glass, plastic, metal, toxic and flammable etc.) All waste containers should be emptied regularly.

Storage

- Stored materials should allow at least one meter (about 3 feet) of clear space under sprinkler heads. Stacking cartons and drums on a firm foundation and cross tying them, where necessary reduces the chance of their movement. Stored materials should not obstruct aisles, stairs, exits, fire equipment, emergency eyewash fountains, emergency showers, or first aid stations.
- All storage areas should be clearly marked.

Fire prevention

- Flammable, combustible, toxic and other hazardous materials should be stored in approved containers in designated areas that are appropriate for the different hazards that they pose.
- Keep all combustible and flammable materials in safety cans during use and only as much as is needed for the job. Oily or greasy rags should be placed in a metal container and disposed of regularly.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

POWER-TAKE-OFF SAFETY

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ All guards in shields must be in place and in good repair.
- ✓ Always shut down power before servicing or unplugging equipment.
- ✓ Wear close-fitting clothes and keep long hair covered/tied when working with powered equipment.
- ✓ Regularly check the condition of all PTO shielding components and ensure they are in place.
- ✓ Always walk around operating equipment and never step onto or across a PTO shaft.

Recognize the hazard

A 540 Power-Take-Off (PTO) shaft travels more than two metres in less than a second. Anything caught by that spinning shaft – clothes, shoelaces, and hair – will instantly be wrapped up. PTO entanglement most often occurs when people try to make repairs while equipment is operating. Other victims have been caught while stepping over or onto rotating shafts.

This leads to the cardinal rule of PTO safety – **Never attempt to repair, adjust, or unplug equipment with the PTO engaged!**

Proper shielding all-important

All PTO shielding must be correctly installed and properly maintained to prevent injury in the event of accidental contact. Let's start at the tractor, and work our way back to the driven machine.

- The tractor's master shield prevents contact with the stub shaft and the front universal joint of the attached machine's driveline. Never operate a tractor with a missing or damaged master shield!
- Tubular shields completely enclose the power shaft of a PTO-operated machine. This integral shield rotates on bearings, independently of the power shaft. Bearings must be in top condition to ensure that the shield will stop spinning if accidentally contacted.

TAILGATE TALKS – POWER-TAKE-OFF SAFETY

- Cones used to cover the universal joints at each end of the power shaft have been greatly improved in recent years. Their flexible nature makes hookup easier.
- The stub shaft on the driven machine should also be covered by shielding. Just like the tractor's master shield, this prevents accidental U-joint contact.
- **With the PTO disengaged and the tractor engine shut off**, check the condition of the entire PTO shielding system. Look for nicks, dents, or bent components. Test for free movement of the tubular shield on its bearings.
- If any shielding component is damaged or missing, or if you feel it doesn't provide adequate protection, talk to your employer about replacing the defective items.
- Before attaching PTO-powered equipment, confirm that the tractor drawbar is adjusted to the length specified in the driven machines manual. This ensures that the telescoping power shaft and shield will stay together when they lengthen.

Your PTO safety checklist

As with all aspects of farm machinery operation, you must be constantly alert to prevent PTO accidents. Follow these steps to avoid PTO entanglement.

- Most importantly, **always disengage the PTO, shut off the tractor engine, and remove the keys** before leaving the tractor seat.
- Keep the tractor's master shield in place at all times. The PTO could be accidentally engaged when no driveline is attached.
- Check frequently to make sure that PTO shielding is in good condition (with power disengaged, of course). Damaged shields or bearings should be repaired or replaced before the equipment is operated again.
- Never step across a rotating PTO shaft! Some equipment must be operated in a stationary location; with you working nearby (for example, grain augers, etc.). Always walk around such machinery.
- Dress for safety. Wear close-fitting clothes and keep long hair covered. Raggy old coats and long boot laces can easily be grabbed by rotating parts.

TAILGATE TALKS – POWER-TAKE-OFF SAFETY

Make shutdown a habit

Additional spinning shafts are often used to transfer power to machine components. Just like a PTO shaft, these can entangle you in an instant. The same principles apply when it comes to safety around any rotating shaft.

Again, it must be emphasized:

Always disengage the PTO, shut off the tractor engine, and remove the keys before leaving the tractor seat!

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

PREVENT TRACTOR OVERTURNS

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Never hitch higher than drawbar height.
- ✓ Always fasten the seatbelt when operating a tractor equipped with rollover protection. If there is no rollover protection, do not fasten the seatbelt.
- ✓ Lock brake pedals together before high speed travel.
- ✓ Keep loader bucket as low as possible to prevent rollover.

Be aware of the danger

- Tractor overturns – both sideways rollovers and backward “flips”- are likely to result in death if the operator is not protected by a rollover protective structure (or ROPS).
- A tractor has a high centre of gravity, compared with a passenger car or pickup truck. This makes them relatively top heavy, and more prone to tipping over.
- Particularly in the case of 2-wheel-drive tractors, the back half of the machine accounts for more than two-thirds of the weight.
- If a tractor’s rear drive wheels can’t turn, the machine will want to turn on its axle when power is engaged. *Think about this one fact:* it can take less than one second for a tractor to reach the “point of no return” in a backwards flip after the front wheels leave the ground!

Prevent sideways overturns

1. Short, quick, high speed turns upset tractors. Slow down before turning.
 2. An attachment like a raised front loader increases a tractor’s centre of gravity, making it even more “tippy”.
- Lock brake pedals together before driving at high speed. Application of uneven brake pressure can literally force a tractor to rollover.

TAILGATE TALKS – PREVENT TRACTOR OVERTURNS

- Keep your tractor under control at all times and under all conditions. Obstructions such as rocks and stumps, or depressions such as dead furrows and pot holes could cause a tractor to roll over.
- Never let a tractor “bounce”- this causes loss of steering control.
- Pull heavy loads and equipment at safe speeds. Try to avoid quick stops, because the heavy load could push the tractor into a skid, and possible rollover.
- Use engine “braking” when going downhill. Shift to a lower gear before starting downhill. Make sure that you don’t use a speed range that allows the tractor to “freewheel”.
- Avoid crossing steep slopes, if possible. Always turn downhill if stability becomes uncertain on a slope.
- Stay at least as far away from ditches and streams as the banks are deep. Any closer and the tractor’s weight could cause the bank to shear.
- Take extra care with loader tractors. A raised, loaded bucket increases the centre of gravity, thereby making the tractor more subject to rollover. Keep the loader bucket as low as possible when turning or transporting. Watch carefully for obstructions or depressions.

Prevent rear rollovers

Slips, trips and falls around farm equipment can have fatal consequences. We’ve already stressed the importance of keeping steps and platforms clean. Here are some additional points to consider when working with machinery.

- *Never* hitch a towed load higher than the tractor drawbar. Hitching too high is a major cause of rearward tractor flips.
- Front chassis weights can be used to counterbalance rear-mounted implements and heavy drawbar loads.
- Always start forward motion slowly.
- Backing down a grade is risky. If brakes are applied, the tractor could rotate around the rear axle and tip over backward.
- If you have to back down a steep grade, do it slowly in a low gear. That should let you stay off the brakes. Whenever possible, *back* tractors up steep slopes, and come down forward.
- Suppose your tractor starts rolling backward down a steep grade with the clutch disengaged. It’s safer to let the tractor roll to the bottom of the slope without applying the brakes or engaging the clutch as both can cause a backward flip.

TAILGATE TALKS – PREVENT TRACTOR OVERTURNS

- Always drive around ditches. Never try to cross them. It is only safe to *back* a tractor out if the drive wheels get lodged in a ditch.
- Back your tractor out if it gets stuck in the mud. Never, ever put boards or logs in front of the drive wheels! This practice has been responsible for a number of backward tips.

ROPS Saves Lives!

A majority of farm tractors are now fitted with rollover protective structures. ROPS cabs and frames are designed to minimize injury potential in the event of a rollover.

It is *critical* for an operator to securely fasten the seatbelt in a ROPS-equipped tractor. It is the belt that holds you within the protected zone should a rollover occur.

However, *do not wear* a seatbelt if your tractor doesn't have a ROPS. On an open tractor, the belt would eliminate any chance of being thrown clear in the event of an overturn.

Drivers must be alert at all times

As you can see, there is plenty to remember when it comes to avoiding tractor upsets. Operators have to be alert at all times, and maintain complete control of their machines. If you are ill, over-tired, or on medication, you should not operate a farm tractor.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS PROTECT YOUR HEARING

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Farmers tend to have greater hearing loss than people in other occupations.
- ✓ If possible, move away from the source of noise or take breaks from the noisy area.
- ✓ Use some form of hearing protection when working in a noisy environment. Ensure they fit properly.
- ✓ Develop an understanding of noise levels that could damage hearing.
- ✓ Have your hearing tested to get a baseline and monitor for signs of hearing deterioration.

Be aware of the hazard

Farmers typically have greater hearing loss than people in other occupations. This is likely due to frequent and continuous exposure to loud noise produced by farm equipment, a barn full of squealing pigs, etc.

How is your hearing? Is it as good as it was a year ago? A decline in the ability to hear is less obvious than losses of other senses. It occurs slowly, usually over a number of years. You may not even realize that your hearing is gradually decreasing, because there is no pain. Often, people who have experienced considerable hearing loss will tend to speak loudly.

Sound and noise

Sound is measured in logarithmic units of sound pressure, called decibels. Values range from zero to 140. The bottom end of the scale represents the acute threshold of human hearing. The noise level inside an acoustically insulated tractor cab is usually about 85 decibels. A shot gun blast produces 140 decibels of sound pressure energy.

Noise is defined as unwanted sound. Loud noises increase heart rate and energy use. This can contribute to fatigue, discomfort, and mental stress. However, the primary effect of noise is loss of hearing. Abusing the ears with loud noises shifts the hearing threshold upward, so that a person can only hear louder sounds.

TAILGATE TALKS – PROTECT YOUR HEARING

You might have experienced this after working in a noisy environment for several hours. When you stop, your ears may ring, and your hearing doesn't seem normal. Hearing will usually return to normal overnight. However, repeated exposure to excessively loud noises will eventually result in permanent hearing loss.

When noise exposure goes down, people often:

- Show fewer signs of stress
- Have more energy
- Experience less hearing loss

How much is too much?

Health and safety experts suggest that 85 decibels is the maximum noise level that a person should be exposed to over the course of an 8-hour day. An uncabbed tractor, power mower, or snowmobile produces approximately 100 decibels, and safe exposure time is only two hours. Feeding time noise levels in livestock barns may be even higher.

Preserve this vital sense

Once damage to hearing has occurred, it is impossible to repair. Everyone should take steps to protect their hearing in the farm workplace.

If you are aware of the sources of noise, you can make better decisions about protecting your hearing. Charts are available that list sound levels produced by different types of equipment and in various working environments. More precise readings require use of a decibel meter.

When it comes to protecting your hearing, it is best to err on the side of caution. Following are basic precautions that all of us should take to prevent hearing loss in the workplace.

1. Limit the length of time exposed to the noise.
2. Stay as far away from noise sources as possible. Doubling the distance from the source reduces the sound pressure to one-fourth its level.
3. Use hearing protection for *all* noisy jobs.
 - Rubber or plastic **ear plugs** fit into the ear canal. A snug fit is important.
 - **Acoustical ear muffs** provide the most effective protection against noise. They don't contribute to infection and discomfort as do ear plugs, which fit tightly and carry dirt to the ear canal. Ear muffs block more noise than plugs because they also cover the sound conducting bones around the ears.

TAILGATE TALKS – PROTECT YOUR HEARING

Check your hearing

Your hearing ability can be checked by audiometric testing through your doctor. It is a good idea to have your hearing assessed. The procedure will let you know whether or not you have already experienced significant hearing loss.

As pointed out earlier, noise-induced hearing loss can't be reversed. However, by recognizing the hazard and taking protective measures, you can guard against further loss of this precious sense.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE SUN

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Repeated exposure to the sun can increase the risk of developing skin cancer. Monitor skin changes.
- ✓ Solar radiation is strongest between 11:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M.
- ✓ Always “cover up” and apply a sunscreen if you will be working outside for more than a few minutes.
- ✓ Select a sunscreen rated SPF 30 or greater.
- ✓ Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes against ultraviolet rays.

Be aware of the danger

A lot of farm work involves being outdoors when the sun’s radiation is most intense. Repeated daily exposure to the sun over a number of years increases an individual’s risk of developing a number of health problems, including:

- Aging, wrinkling, and drying out of the skin
- Skin cancer
- Lip cancer
- Damage to the eyes

Fair skinned individuals are at greatest risk. However, excessive exposure to the sun’s ultraviolet rays can even be harmful if you have dark hair and dark skin.

Did you know that it is even possible to get sunburned on a cloudy day?

TAILGATE TALKS – PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE SUN

Take steps to protect yourself

Solar radiation is strongest between 11:00 A.M. and 3:00 P.M. It's especially important to protect your skin against the sun during these hours.

- Try to limit your time in the sun. That can be tough in the farm workplace! If you have to work outside all day, take your breaks indoors, if possible. At least try to get into the shade for a few minutes every hour.
- Liberally apply sunscreen lotion on the face, neck, hands, forearms, ears, and any other unprotected skin. Use a product with a broad spectrum sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. Broad spectrum protects you from ultraviolet radiation UVA and UVB. Use a UV-blocking lip balm.
- Put sunscreen on before heading outdoors. Reapply the lotion as required during the day.
- Eye damage can result from prolonged exposure to the sun. Always wear sunglasses that filter out at least 90% of the sun's ultraviolet rays.

Choose the right clothing to protect the rest of the body.

1. Cover up as much as possible. Lightweight, tightly-woven shirts and long pants will block most of the sun's rays. Light coloured cotton is most comfortable under hot summer conditions. Garments should fit comfortably and not be too tight. However, loose or floppy clothes should not be worn if there is any chance you will be working around machinery.
2. You must wear a hat. It should shade the ears, face, temples, and back of the neck. Standard baseball caps don't offer much protection against the sun. You need to add a neck shade to protect the back of the neck and the ears. The best choices in head gear include pith helmets and straw hats with extra wide brims.

Learn to recognize skin problems

We all need to check our skin regularly for signs of damage that could indicate a health problem. Take a close look at the top of your head, face, lips, and the tips of your ears. Use a full length mirror for a "head-to-toe" inspection.

TAILGATE TALKS – PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THE SUN

Look for the following during your skin check.

1. Changes in the size, shape, or colour of moles. In particular, watch for:
 - Irregular borders on moles (ragged, notched, or blurred edges)
 - Moles that aren't symmetrical (one half doesn't match the other)
 - Colours that aren't uniform throughout
 - Moles that are bigger than a pencil eraser
2. Also be on the lookout for:
 - Sores that bleed and don't heal
 - A change in the sensation of a mole, such as itchiness or pain
 - Red patches or lumps; don't overlook the top of the head
 - New moles

Any of the above could be an indication of skin cancer. If caught early, it may be treated quite effectively. If you suspect a problem see your doctor!

Protecting the skin and eyes against the sun is one of the best things you can do to protect your future health.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

RECOGNIZING COMMON FARM EQUIPMENT HAZARDS

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ ALWAYS shut off the power and wait for all parts to stop moving before servicing or unplugging a machine.
- ✓ Ensure that *all* guards and shields are in place, well maintained and not damaged.
- ✓ Read the warning decals affixed to farm equipment.
- ✓ Keep children and bystanders away from operating machines.

Be aware of the danger

Operating farm equipment presents a serious threat to life and limb. You need to be able to recognize machine hazards, and take the appropriate steps to protect yourself.

When working with farm equipment, accident prevention depends on:

- Knowledge of hazards
- Keeping all guards and shields in place and well maintained.
- Heeding the warnings spelled out on the various decals affixed to equipment.
- *Always* disengaging the power, shutting off the engine, pocketing the key, and waiting for all parts to stop moving before doing any kind of work on a machine.

Recognize common equipment hazards

A multitude of different machines are used in a typical farm operation. However, the major farm equipment hazards are common to all makes and models.

TAILGATE TALKS – RECOGNIZING COMMON FARM EQUIPMENT HAZARDS

All farm workers should learn to recognize the following hazard points on farm equipment, and take appropriate actions to avoid accidental contact.

1. **Pinch points** exist where two parts move together, with at least one of them turning in a circle. Examples include chain drives, belt drives, gear drives, and feeder rolls. Clothing can become caught and drawn into a pinch point. Never reach into the area near a rotating part.
2. **Pull-in accidents** happen when a person tries to unclog or feed material by hand into an operating machine. Feed rolls and other machine components are simply too fast. Never kick a wad of hay into a baler pick up.
3. **Wrap points** exist wherever there is an exposed, rotating shaft. Never try to remove twine that is partially wrapped around a shaft which is in rotation. Once material is caught by the shaft, there is no escape. Important wrapping hazards include:
 - Shaft ends which protrude beyond bearings
 - Splined, square and hex-shaped shafts are most likely to wrap hair or clothing
 - Couplers, u-joints, keys, and other fasteners on shafts increase the wrapping hazard
 - Exposed beaters and pickup reels are also a wrapping threat
4. **Shear points** exist where the edges of two components move across each other (like scissors). A **cutting point** is created when an object moves forcefully enough to cut relatively soft material. Shearing and cutting devices are widely used on harvesting equipment. The active parts may rotate (rotary mower) or reciprocate (sickle bar). Cutting and shear points also exist on several devices that are not designed to cut material.
5. **Thrown objects**-some farm machines can propel objects great distances with tremendous force. Rotary mowers and flail choppers can hurl small stones and other debris. Combine straw choppers and hammer mills can fling kernels and other crop material with considerable force.
6. **Freewheeling parts** on farm equipment may continue to rotate for two minutes or more after power is disengaged. Examples include forage harvester cutter heads, hammer mills, baler flywheels, rotary mowers, and blower fans.
7. **Crush points** are created when two objects move toward each other, or when one object moves toward a stationary item. A crush point exists between an implement tongue and a tractor drawbar. Other examples of potential crush points include jacked-up equipment, raised hydraulic components, and overhead garage doors. Never work under raised equipment unless it is securely blocked.

TAILGATE TALKS – RECOGNIZING COMMON FARM EQUIPMENT HAZARDS

Recognition, avoidance, prevention

To prevent farm equipment accidents, you first must learn to recognize the hazards that machines present. Develop good safety habits to ensure that you have no contact with operating machinery.

- Under no circumstances should you ever reach into any part of an operating machine. *Always* disengage power, shut off the engine, take the key, and wait for all parts to stop moving before attempting to service or unplug equipment.
- All guards and shields must be in place and properly maintained. Replace all shielding that was removed to make repairs.
- When hitching equipment, the helper should stand clear until the tractor is backed into position. Always inch the tractor forward (never backward) to make necessary positioning adjustments.
- Bystanders should be kept away from areas where they could be struck by thrown objects

It is vital to "THINK" about actions before you take them. The bottom line is that you must never attempt to do any kind of work on farm equipment while the power is engaged.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

RESPIRATORY HAZARDS IN AGRICULTURE

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Minimize exposure to dust, spores and gases.
- ✓ Personal Protective Equipment - Enter silos or manure pits only with air-supplied full face respirator.
- ✓ Use a wet process when cleaning.
- ✓ Use chemical cartridges for toxic organic vapours.

Dusts

Dust and mould spores are encountered in many agricultural activities, and are often associated with respiratory illnesses, such as Farmers Lung, Toxic Organic Dust Syndrome, and Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis.

Engineering practices

The prevention of particle release and control of dust is achieved by providing leak proof ducts and enclosed conveyor systems for grains and feeds. Buildings should have local ventilation systems in areas frequented by workers where particulates become airborne. For field operations self-propelled equipment should have enclosed cabs provided with filtered air. Where crushers, grinders and mixers are used, the area should be enclosed to contain the airborne materials.

Work practices

There are several practices that can either help prevent the growth of mould spores or limit the damage they can cause. The following measures are recommended:

- Harvested crops such as hay and grains should be dry when stored (14% moisture content). Ventilate areas where bales are being opened and wear respiratory protection when doing so.

TAILGATE TALKS – RESPIRATORY HAZARDS IN AGRICULTURE

- Fungi and dust from grain and animal confinement can be eliminated by using pellet feed rather than dusty chopped feed, or by substituting silage for hay.
- When cleaning use a wet process.
- Use a fork to spread out open bales rather than doing it manually.
- In the fields, you can lower the speed of equipment to reduce the release of fine particles.
- Organize equipment and work practices so that any prevailing wind can carry the dust away from your face.
- Indoor dust minimizing practices include pressure washing with cold water, water with additives and sprinkling with agents such as vegetable oil. Animal feeding should be done just before leaving a room to limit worker exposure. Fast dumping of large amounts of material creates greater amounts of dust.

Gases

A variety of potentially toxic gases are produced during many routine agricultural operations. These gases are commonly produced in areas such as silos and manure pits.

Nitrogen oxides – (mainly in silos) Do not enter a silo until 2-3 weeks after filling, post warning signs, and run the blowers for at least 30 minutes before entering a filled silo. Workers entering a silo should wear an air supplied full face respirator and follow confined space entry procedures.

Carbon monoxide – ensure that equipment such as gas heaters, pressure washers and vehicles are functioning properly. When working indoors ensure the building is well ventilated, especially where internal combustion engines may be operating.

Ammonia – Ammonia concentration can be reduced in poultry barns by the use of peat for litter. Keep bedding dry to reduce ammonia levels. To reduce ammonia levels in livestock buildings, prevent air leakage through manure channels. Exhaust as much air as possible through the manure channels. Use tight fitting hatches, water traps or evacuation fans to eliminate air leakage. Do not enter manure pits during agitation.

Hydrogen Sulfide (H₂S) – is considered the most dangerous by-product of manure decomposition. H₂S is heavier than air so settles in lower areas and can remain in high concentrations even after ventilation. It

TAILGATE TALKS – RESPIRATORY HAZARDS IN AGRICULTURE

has a distinct rotten egg smell. It is highly toxic: with exposure at very low concentrations it is a serious irritant; at moderate to higher exposures it is a serious threat to health, even deadly. To decrease hydrogen sulfide leaks, there should be a gas trap between the confinement building and outside storage; airflow should be directed towards the floor to keep dust and gases from entering the breathing zone of the worker.

Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) – is heavier than air and difficult to detect. It displaces oxygen and acts as an asphyxiant. At moderate concentrations it causes shortness of breath and dizziness with higher concentrations being fatal. It is a by-product of manure decomposition and fermentation.

Methane (CH₄) – is odourless and lighter than air, so it tends to accumulate at the top of manure pits. It is an asphyxiant at extremely high concentrations. The main hazard is its flammable, explosive nature. Because it is extremely difficult to detect it should be anticipated as being present in all manure storage areas.

Farm chemicals

Pesticides, fertilizers, and sanitizers are common farm chemicals which produce harmful fumes. Always follow label direction when handling these chemicals. Regularly maintain spraying equipment to avoid rupture/leaking valves.

Personal protective equipment.

The selection of specific types of protective equipment depends on the hazard present and the amount of filtering necessary. There are two general types of air-purifying respirators: the chemical cartridge and the mechanical filter.

Chemical cartridges protect against certain gases and all but the most toxic vapours. Chemical cartridges that work in conjunction with a specific mechanical filter should be used for protection during spray painting or pesticide application. Do not use chemical cartridge filters when working with gases or vapours that cannot be effectively filtered out by the cartridge.

A **mechanical filter** respirator with toxic dust approval should be used to protect against grain dust and moulds. It should be tightly sealed around the nose and mouth. Do not use a mechanical filter for protection from chemicals or toxic gases.

TAILGATE TALKS – RESPIRATORY HAZARDS IN AGRICULTURE

Powered air purifiers can be a mechanical filter, a chemical cartridge or both. They may be preferred for excessively high concentration of dust or pesticides, but they cannot be used in oxygen-limited environments.

Air supplied respirators – two types of air supplied respirators are approved for use in oxygen deficient areas, such as manure pits, silos containing silo gas, air-tight silos or bins containing high-moisture grain. They are hose mask with blower and emergency air supply and the self-contained breathing apparatus.

These respirators all offer effective protection against toxic dust. The primary differences are the quality of fit, the length of time the protection will be provided and the cost.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

SAFE HANDLING OF FARM ANIMALS

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Know sensitivity warning signs of animals.
- ✓ Know the characteristics of animal vision and hearing.
- ✓ Know safe livestock handling practices. Touch animals gently. Avoid the kicking region when approaching an animal. Avoid exposing animals to loud noises and quick movements.
- ✓ Maintain housekeeping, even lighting and keep alleyways and walking surfaces clear of clutter.
- ✓ Avoid entering small enclosed areas with an animal unless equipped with a man gate.

Sensitivity warnings

Lack of knowledge of animal characteristics and poor animal handling facilities and environments can result in a high potential for accidents. Workers must always be on guard when working with or around animals.

Most animal species have and display characteristic signs of fear, aggression and contentment. Astute handlers should be sensitive to such warnings evidenced by raised or pinned ears, raised tail, raised back hair, bared teeth, pawing the ground, and/or snorting.

Handling Methods

Most animals respond favourably to calm and deliberate movement and responses from a handler. Avoid loud noises and be patient. Never prod an animal when it has no place to go. Move slowly and deliberately around livestock, with the safest approach being to announce your approach through a touch to the animal's front side.

TAILGATE TALKS – SAFE HANDLING OF FARM ANIMALS

Respect rather than fear livestock. Animals will defend their territory. When working around animals keep in mind that there is always the potential for harm. Most animals are highly protective of their young so be careful around newborn animals. Avoid getting between a cow and her new calf. Carry out all new born calf treatment in an area isolated from the cow. Extreme caution should be practiced when handling male animals.

Always provide an escape route, especially when working in close quarters, with sick, or injured animals, or under adverse conditions such as severe storms. Try to avoid entering a small-enclosed area with large animals unless it is equipped with a man gate that you can easily get to.

Exercise extra care around strange animals and use extreme care if strangers must be around your animals. Maintain equipment and facilities in good repair and exercise “good housekeeping practices”.

Cattle and horses cannot see directly behind them, (blind spot) therefore sudden movements from behind will spook them, which may result in a “flight or fight” response. Give dairy cattle a moment to adapt to the new environment before beginning your work. Always work cattle from the hip, not behind, and try to keep out of sight. Always approach a horse from the left and from the front if possible. Speak softly when approaching from behind to let it know of your presence. When you are within reach, touch the horse first by gently stroking the shoulder or rump and move calmly towards the head.

Animal Facilities

Many injuries related to livestock handling could be directly attributed to inadequate facilities, equipment failures and poor building structures.

Tripping hazards can be encountered such as high door sills. Working in narrow or cluttered alleyways, and on uneven walking surfaces can also be dangerous.

Concrete floors are best for livestock. Floor ramp and step finishes should be roughened to prevent slipping under wet conditions. High traffic areas, such as alleyways, should be grooved. Floors should be constructed to allow water to drain quickly. Slatted floors can be used to keep animals dry in a confinement system.

Fencing and gates should be strong and durable to contain crowded livestock. Alleys and chutes should be wide enough for the animal to pass, but not wide enough for the animal to turn around. Animals are less likely to balk in chutes constructed with solid walls instead of fencing materials.

TAILGATE TALKS – SAFE HANDLING OF FARM ANIMALS

Lighting should be even and diffused to eliminate glare. Animals generally move readily from dark areas into well-lit areas but are reluctant to move from lighted areas into dark areas. Bright spots and shadows tend to make animals skittish, especially in crowded or loading areas. Animal facility layouts should be designed so animals do not look directly into the sun when being moved.

Appropriate handling equipment can reduce injuries to animals and humans and save labour and time during various phases of production. For example, adequate equipment can reduce time needed for feeding, medical care/treatment, loading animals for market, “housekeeping”, data recording, etc.

Personal Protective Equipment

Workers should always wear steel-toed boots when working with animals, and protective gloves and other protective clothing when working with sick or hurt animals. A dust filter mask should be used where necessary to minimize respiratory hazards.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

SAFE LIFTING AND CARRYING TECHNIQUES

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Bend your knees, not your back.
- ✓ Keep the slight inward curve in your lower back.
- ✓ Keep the load close to the body.
- ✓ Don't twist. Move your feet to turn.

Improper lifting techniques are responsible for a large percentage of back injuries among agricultural workers. Proper methods of lifting and handling protect against injury, and make work easier. You need to "think" about what you are going to do *before* bending to pick up an object. Over time, safe lifting technique should become a habit.

Things to consider BEFORE lifting or moving items

- Prepare your back. Avoid lifting items immediately after periods of prolonged sitting. Stand and walk around or stretch to prepare the back muscles.
- Plan your move. Ensure your pathway is clear before you lift or move items and remove any obstacles ahead of time. Know where the load will be placed before lifting or moving. Avoid placing loads on the floor if possible.
- Get help. Know the weight of the load and your capabilities. Avoid lifting a load that is awkward or too heavy for you. Get assistance or use equipment (e.g. wheelbarrow, cart, or dolly)

Proper lifting techniques

- Move as close to the load as possible and position your feet about shoulder width apart to establish a wide base of support.
- Bend your knees. Avoid rounding your back. Keep the slight inward curve in your lower back.

TAILGATE TALKS – SAFE LIFTING AND CARRYING TECHNIQUES

- Test the load's weight by lifting up one end. Ensure the load is free to move.
- Grab the load firmly with your whole hand, not just the fingers. Keep the load balanced.
- Use your legs to lift the load, not your back. Lift smoothly. Avoid sudden, jerky movements.
- Keep the load close to your body, with your elbows slightly bent and your upper arms straight.
- Face in the direction of the lift. Move your feet to turn. Avoid twisting your body.

Make it a habit to follow the above steps to reduce your risk of having an injury.

Team lifting must be co-ordinated

If the weight, shape, or size of an object makes the job too much for one person, ask for help.

Ideally, workers should be of approximately the same size for team lifting. One individual needs to be responsible for control of the action to ensure proper co-ordination. If one worker lifts too soon, shifts the load, or lowers it improperly, either they or the person working with them may be injured.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

SKID STEER SAFETY

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Rollover protective structures and safety screens should be in place at all times.
- ✓ Fasten seat belts and employ safety bars before starting skid steers.
- ✓ Always carry loads low and keep arms lowered while travelling.
- ✓ Point the loader's heavy end uphill when driving up and down a slope. Don't drive across a slope.
- ✓ The skid steer bucket is not a "work platform".

Know your machine

- Balance is the key to the stability and turning capability of a skid steer. With no load in the bucket, roughly two-thirds of the weight is on the rear axles. Weight shifts to the front wheels when the bucket is loaded.
- Overloading can make a skid steer excessively front heavy. This reduces stability and handling response.
- Never attempt to operate the steering levers or any other hydraulic controls while standing outside of the cab! The skid steer will respond instantly when the levers are engaged.
- Operation of controls becomes almost instinctive for an experienced skid steer driver. Novices can become confused as a result of having to perform a number of functions at one time. If this happens, it is usually best to remove hands and feet from the controls. All machine functions will stop when pressure on the controls is released.
- Never remove the rollover protective structure from a skid steer. Keep side screens in place.
- Always use the seat belt and seat bar whenever you are operating a skid steer.
- Always make sure that attachment locking devices are in place, even if you are switching attachments for only a few minutes. If not locked, an attachment could break free and roll back down the loader arms, or fall onto a bystander.

TAILGATE TALKS – SKID STEER SAFETY

Safe skid steer travel

- Skid steer stability decreases as the loader arms are raised. Always keep the bucket as low as possible when traveling or turning.
- Avoid steep slopes and rough terrain. Always travel up and down slopes, never across.
- Move up and down slopes with the heavy end of the loader pointed uphill. Remember, no load=most weight on the rear of the skid steer; loaded bucket=more weight on the front.
- Stay as far away from creeks, gullies and ravines as the banks are deep.
- Road travel with a skid steer is not recommended.

Work efficiently

- Drive slowly into the manure pack or material pile, then raise the front of the attachment. Back away with the load in the tilted-up bucket or fork.
- Drive to the unloading site with loader arms down. Stop, raise the arms, and drive forward slowly until the bucket is just over the spreader or pile.
- Use the hydraulics to keep the attachment level while raising the lift arms at a slow, even rate. Be prepared to lower the load quickly if the skid steer becomes unstable.

Work safely

- Familiarize yourself with warning devices, gauges, and controls. Study operating procedures outlined in the manual.
- Check for obstacles or soft soil conditions in the work area.
- Check for overhead power lines.
- **Riders must never be permitted on skid steers.**
- Never use a skid steer as a work platform or personnel carrier.
- Adjust speed to suit working conditions and terrain. Avoid sudden stops, starts, or turns.
- Never lift, swing, or otherwise move a load over anyone.
- Take care when handling loose materials, such as rocks. Lifting the arms too high and rolling the bucket back too far could cause the objects to fall into the cab.

TAILGATE TALKS – SKID STEER SAFETY

- Avoid dumping over fence posts or similar obstructions that could enter the cab if the loader were to tip forward.
- Take care when backfilling. The trench wall could collapse under the skid steer's weight.
- Never undercut a high embankment. The earth could give way and bury the loader.
- If it is necessary to carry out repairs with the loader arms raised, be sure to lock the arms in place.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Keep all work areas, including aisles and walkways, free of clutter.
- ✓ Always use the 3-point technique for mounting and dismounting tractors and other equipment.
- ✓ Be extra careful working around equipment when footing is bad.
- ✓ Wear slip-resistant footwear.
- ✓ Put tools away when you finish using them.

Be aware of the danger

Slipping on an icy surface or tripping over some old boards stacked in a walkway can have serious consequences. In fact, a substantial number of farm workplace injuries, and even some fatalities, have resulted from what we might think of as a simple fall.

Management has a responsibility to eliminate slip and trip hazards to the greatest extent possible. Workers need to adopt habits that will reduce their chances of being injured in a fall.

- Learn to recognize potential "slip and trip" hazards.
- Take steps to eliminate the hazards. Check with your supervisor if you come across something that you feel could be a threat to sound footing.
- Stay alert, and think about your actions.

Hazard elimination

- Keep all aisles and walkways free of clutter and debris.
- Clean up oil spills and other slippery materials immediately.
- Set aside a few minutes to put tools away and clean up debris at the end of the day. Work is more efficient and enjoyable in a clean, well-organized environment.

TAILGATE TALKS – SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

- Keep feed throwdown holes covered when not in use. Install guard rails around clean-out openings in multi-floored poultry houses.
- Spread sand and/or salt on icy surfaces if work has to be done in the vicinity. If the weather is particularly bad, consider putting the job off until conditions improve.
- Keep steps and platforms of tractors and other equipment clean and dry. Take the time to clean off mud, ice, snow, manure, grease, and other debris that can accumulate on these surfaces. Don't carry tools, chains, etc. on the platform.
- **Slip-resistant safety footwear** is a *must* for all farm workers.

The above are but a few examples of “good housekeeping” practices that should be followed to minimize “slip and trip” hazards. You can probably think of several others. It is really important to develop an awareness of potential hazards, and take the necessary steps to eliminate them before someone gets hurt.

Take extra care around machinery

Slips, trips and falls around farm equipment can have fatal consequences. We've already stressed the importance of keeping steps and platforms clean. Here are some additional points to consider when working with machinery.

- Never jump from a tractor. There is always the danger of catching clothing on pedals, lever, or other protruding parts. You could land on an uneven surface and injure your ankles, legs, or back.
- Always use handrails, handholds, and steps to mount or dismount tractors and self-propelled equipment. Follow the **3-point system**: either two hands and one foot, or one hand and two feet on the machine at all times.
- Never try to operate equipment from any position other than the seat! Maintain safe operating speeds, and take a break when you are tired. **Never allow passengers to ride along!** They are much more likely to fall from a moving machine.
- Always shut the power off and pocket the key before making repairs and adjustments. That way, if someone does fall onto the equipment, they won't become entangled.
- Take extra care when operating stationary equipment, for example: grain augers, generators, grinder-mixers, etc. Stay well clear of the machinery while it is running. Try to maintain good footing in the surrounding area.

TAILGATE TALKS – SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

Think, then act

Most falls are preventable. You need to be alert on the job, and develop awareness of what could constitute a “slip and trip” hazard.

It is vital to “THINK” about actions before you take them. That way, you’ll be more likely to recognize hazards, and take the steps necessary to eliminate or avoid them.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

WHMIS – WORKPLACE HAZARDOUS MATERIAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

Points to Emphasize

- ✓ Label all controlled hazardous materials including portable containers. Replace labels when needed.
- ✓ Obtain Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all controlled materials and maintain an inventory.
- ✓ Train employees. Know WHMIS classifications.
- ✓ Read product label and MSDS before using chemicals for the first time.
- ✓ Use appropriate personal protective equipment when using chemicals.
- ✓ Only use chemicals with labels and MSDS and do not mix chemicals unless directed by chemical supplier.

WHMIS is a comprehensive plan for providing information on the use of controlled hazardous materials in the work place. There are six classifications (A-F) of WHMIS, several of which have divisions or sub-divisions.

WHMIS classifications



Compressed Gases – Class A – indicates a container with pressure inside. Examples: propane, oxygen, and acetylene.



Flammable & Combustible Material – Class B – is a product, which may ignite, or burn or may be explosive in some situations. Examples are gasoline and paint thinners.



Oxidizing Material – Class C – This material can create a fire in the presence of flammable or combustible materials. May burn eyes and skin on contact. Example: ammonium nitrate.

TAILGATE TALKS – WHMIS – WORKPLACE HAZARDOUS MATERIAL INFORMATION SYSTEM



Poisonous – Class D 1 (A & B) – This material can act quickly to produce toxic effects or death if it enters the body. Two subdivisions are provided: A – very toxic materials and B – toxic materials. Example: pine oil, cyanide.



Other Toxic Effects – Class D2 (A&B) – This symbol covers a wide range of potential hazards, both acute (immediate) and chronic (long-term). Two subdivisions are provided: A – very toxic materials and B – toxic materials. Example: asbestos fibres and acetone.



Biohazardous Infectious Materials – Class D3 – These materials are likely to infect the body with a disease. Example: from used hypodermic needles.



Corrosive Material – Class E – These materials can cause severe tissue damage with prolonged contact. Example: chromic acid.



Dangerously Reactive Material – Class F – This material can react with other materials or is unstable. Dangers may occur from jarring, heating or exposure to light. Example: acetylene.

Labels:

All hazardous products in the workplace must be labelled. There are two types of labels: *supplier labels* and *workplace labels*.

A **supplier label** must appear on all products received at workplaces. It can be recognized by the WHMIS hatched border.

A **workplace label** is used when some of the controlled product is put into another container for use, a controlled product arrives in bulk without a supplier label, where a product is produced in the workplace, and where a supplier label has become illegible or has been accidentally removed.

Workplace labels must contain the following: Product identifier, information on safe handling of the product, a statement that the MSDS is available. There is no specific design for workplace labels other than the content requirement.

Workplace Identifier

A workplace identifier is a substitute for the workplace label. Its use is permitted in circumstances where a workplace label might not be practical. Example: controlled substances in pipes.

TAILGATE TALKS - WHMIS - WORKPLACE HAZARDOUS MATERIAL INFORMATION SYSTEM

A workplace identifier could be, any means of identification, such as a colour coding, warning signs and pictures that convey the message.

Material Safety Data Sheets

The Material Safety Data Sheet is the second level of the WHMIS Information delivery system. MSDS is compiled by the supplier of the product.

Every MSDS must be current and updated every three years. The employer must obtain any new information added to the MSDS by the supplier.

Training

The third level of the WHMIS information delivery system is an employee education program. Employee training should include:

- Education in the content, purpose, and significance of information labels and MSDS.
- The use and types of identification, procedures for the safe handling storage, use and disposal of controlled products.
- Training in emergency procedures involving controlled products and procedures to follow when stray emissions are present.

Notes:

TAILGATE TALKS

© Workplace Safety & Prevention Services 2014. Workplace Safety & Prevention Services (WSPS) grants permission to approved end users to reproduce this document in whole or in part, provided its intended use is for non-commercial, educational purposes and that full acknowledgement is given to the WSPS. Approved end users are firms registered with the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board. WSPS reserves the right to extend this permission to other stakeholders and interested parties by express written permission upon application. WSPS extends no warranty to materials amended or altered by the end user. Under no circumstances is this document, or any portion thereof, to be duplicated for purposes of sale or for external reproduction or distribution.

(Sample WSPS acknowledgement, "Reproduced or adapted from name of solution with permission of Workplace Safety & Prevention Services, Mississauga, Ontario.")

The information contained in this reference material is distributed as a guide only. It is generally current to the best of our knowledge as at the revision date, having been compiled from sources believed to be reliable and to represent the best current opinion on the subject. No warranty, guarantee, or representation is made by WSPS as to the absolute correctness or sufficiency of any representation contained in this reference material. WSPS assumes no responsibility in connection therewith; nor can it be assumed that all acceptable safety measures are contained in this reference material, or that other or additional measures may not be required in particular or exceptional conditions or circumstances.

Revised: October 2014