



MAFES Dawg Tracks

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*Safety Tips: Hazards & Controls
In Agricultural Operations*



In agriculture operations employees are exposed to many different hazards, involving safety, environmental, biological and respiratory issues. These hazards are derived from vehicular rollovers, musculoskeletal injuries (back, and other body injuries), equipment hazards, grain bins, unsanitary conditions, pesticides and other 4related hazards.

HEAT-

Heat illnesses can be deadly. Every year thousands of agriculture workers become sick from exposure to heat and some even die. However, heat illnesses and death are preventable.

Heat Hazards-

- ✓ Extreme exposure to hot and humid conditions creates a high risk of heat illness.
- ✓ Heavy work projects and wearing heavy and bulky protective clothing creates a risk of heat illness.

Controls-

In hot conditions, remember – **WATER, REST & SHADE.**

- Drink water every 15 minutes, thirsty or not.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat and light-colored clothing.
- Rest in the shade.
- Be aware of your fellow workers; be aware of your location in case of an emergency and you need to get medical attention.

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LADDERS & FALLS-

Deaths and injuries from falls continue to be a major hazard for farmworkers.

- The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) states that agricultural workers had a non-fatal, fall-related injury rate of 48.2 per 10,000 workers in 2011, which placed this rate much higher than the same type of injuries from transportation, mining and manufacturing operations.
- Between 2007 and 2011 the BLS reported that 167 agricultural workers' deaths were due to falls.

Fall Prevention Tips-

- ✓ **Find the hazard** – Analyze and physically check all the farming operations that are performed.
- ✓ **Assess the Risk** – After identifying the potential hazards, determine the potential likelihood of them happening, the frequency, duration and physical condition.
- ✓ **Control the risks** – After assessing the potential risks, a mitigation session should be conducted to eliminate those risks that can be and create devices that help to control the others.

MUSCULOSKELETAL INJURIES-

- Workers in agricultural operations in both crop and animal production experience repetitive motions in sometimes awkward positions than can cause musculoskeletal injuries.

- Ergonomic risk factors are found in jobs requiring repetitive, forceful or prolonged exertions of the hands, frequent or heavy lifting, pushing, pulling or carrying heavy objects and prolonged awkward postures. Vibration and cold can intensify these conditions.
- New technology can reduce some types of ergonomic injuries but can increase others. An example is the dairy farmer who used to be on his knees milking at times, but now with new milking technology the problem has shifted to his hands, arms and shoulders, so the musculoskeletal disorder has shifted.

HAZARDOUS EQUIPMENT AND MACHINERY-

Agriculture workers routinely use shovels, hoes, knives and other cutting tools, work on ladders, or use various types of shop machinery. These tools, as necessary and useful as they are, can be hazardous, causing injuries if they aren't used correctly and maintained.

- All tools should be maintained in good condition and used according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Power tools must be properly grounded or double insulated and all guards and shields must be in place.
- Farmworkers must use the proper personal protective equipment (PPE), making sure that there are no loose ends or threads that could get caught in machinery. Long hair should be tied back to avoid getting caught in machinery as well.
- Additionally, shops should be well lit, walkways, shop floor areas clear of obstacles that could cause slips, trips, or falls.

UNSANITARY CONDITIONS-

The lack of drinking water, sanitation facilities and/or hand washing facilities can lead to many health effects. Farmworkers may suffer from heat stroke or exhaustion from an insufficient intake of potable water, urinary infections due to urine retention from inadequate availability of toilets, agrichemical poisoning from the lack of adequate hand washing facilities, and infectious or other communicable diseases from microbial and parasitic exposures. The Field Sanitation Standard (1928.110-OSHA) requires any establishment with 11 or more workers to provide the necessary toilets, potable drinking water and hand washing facilities to hand laborers in the field. We are not covered by OSHA regulations, but all of these items are provided by MAFES for all farm workers anyway.

There are other subjects regarding agricultural hazards and controls that we shall cover in separate issues, such as vehicular hazards and pesticide handling.

***SAFETY RULES ARE MADE TO FOLLOW
SO
TAKE CARE SO WE CAN SEE YOU
TOMMORROW!!***