



MAFES Dawg Tracks

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Reduce Your Risk of a Tractor Overturn

Tractor overturns are the leading cause of fatal injuries on U.S. farms, resulting in an average of about 130 deaths each year.

- ✓ 1 in 10 operators overturn a tractor in his or her lifetime.
- ✓ 80% of deaths caused by tractor overturns involve experienced operators.
- ✓ 1 in 7 farmers involved in tractor overturns are permanently disabled.
- ✓ 7 of 10 farms will go out of business within 5 years following a tractor-related fatality.

CAUSES OF TRACTOR OVERTURNS-

- As noted above, each year hundreds of people in the USA are killed in tractor accidents. The majority of these deaths occur because of tractor overturns.
- Overturns occur very quickly, some on the side and others backwards, which doesn't leave much time for the operator to escape.
- Some major causes of overturns are:
 - ~driving too fast for existing conditions.
 - ~running into obstructions, such as rocks, stumps, ditches, or holes.
 - ~turning corners too sharply, especially with a narrow front-end tractor.
 - ~driving or turning too quickly on steep slopes.
 - ~hitching equipment above the normal drawbar height.
 - ~operating with a heavy or shifting load in a front-end loader raised too high.

ROLLOVER PROTECTIVE STRUCTURES-

- Your chances of surviving an overturn are very good if the tractor is equipped with the rollover protective structure (ROPS) and assuming that you are connected to the seatbelt. Statistics have proven that tractors equipped with the ROPS and seatbelt, if used by the operator, your chances of survival with an injury only is over 95%.
- A ROPS is a cab or frame that is specially designed to keep you within a protective zone if your tractor overturns. It is important for you to wear the seat belt so you aren't thrown from the tractor or crushed by the overturning tractor.
- If your tractor is equipped with a folding ROPS, make sure that it is in the upright position when you are outside the low-clearance application.
- **Do not install or build your own ROPS!** ROPS are specifically designed and engineered for specific tractor sizes and weights. They are crust-tested to meet industry standards to make sure that they will perform properly in an overturn. Fabricating or installing ROPS yourself may impart a false sense of security-which in reality there is no assurance that a homemade or shop made ROPS will meet standards for all steel, fasteners, or joints when they are tested.

It takes less than 1 second for a tractor to overturn backwards. It is impossible to react quickly enough to jump clear of a rolling tractor. If an operator isn't struck by the tractor when he or she is thrown off, it is likely that they may be struck or crushed by the equipment or load hitched to the tractor.

TIPS TO REDUCE THE RISK OF AN OVERTURN-

- Always be on the alert for potential hazards, such as rocks stumps, slippery surfaces, steep slopes or rough terrain.
- Slow down when turning corners.
- Stay as far away as possible from holes and ditches.
- Don't drive near the edge of a gully, irrigation ditch, or a steep embankment. The ground may give way.
- Avoid driving on steep slopes, but if you do:
 - ~ Back the tractor up the hill to help keep the weight on the front wheels.
 - ~ Drive smoothly. Don't stop or shift gears.
 - ~ Drive forward down a hill, keeping the tractor in low gear.
- Don't hitch above the normal drawbar height. This increases the potential for a backward rollover.
- Only hitch to the drawbar or other hitch points recommended by the manufacturer. If you are in doubt about where to hitch, go ask your supervisor.
- Keep the front-end loader as low as possible when carrying a load. Driving with a raised load in a front-end loader reduced the tractor's stability.

OTHER GENERAL SAFETY TIPS-

- ✓ Don't drive a tractor if you're overly tired or sick.
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with new terrain.
- ✓ Check around the tractor before moving and look around before turning or changing directions.
- ✓ Never allow a passenger on the tractor with you. **“One Seat-One Rider” is always in effect.**
- ✓ Always turn the tractor off after it has stopped. Use the parking brake or shift into “park” position. Then remove the key.

TRACTOR SAFETY DO'S & DON'TS

Do:

- ~ **If your tractor has ROPS, always use the seatbelt.**
- ~ **Go slowly when driving on slippery or rough terrain.**
- ~ **Keep the front end as low as possible when carrying a load.**

Don't:

- ~ **Pull a load that's heavier than your tractor is rated for. Be especially careful on hilly ground.**
 - ~ **Drive forward up a hill. Back the tractor up the hill instead.**
 - ~ **Take your eyes off the terrain ahead of you. Always look Where you are going.**
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**IF YOUR TRACTOR HAS
ROPS/SEATBELTS
USE THEM
ITS
SELF-DEFENSE!!**