

MAFES Dawg Tracks

November 7, 2016



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MS AGRICULTURAL AND
FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

Agriculture Safety
on Public Roads

Moving farm equipment on public roads can be a risky business. Operators need to drive defensively and stay focused the whole time that they are driving on open roads. Thousands of farm vehicles are involved in accidents each year on public roads.

A major cause of accidents on public roads is the difference in the speed between vehicles and tractors. Vehicles driving at a high rate of speed approach tractors so fast that they only have a few seconds to react and adjust to avoid an accident. Rear-end collisions are especially common.

CAUSES OF FARM EQUIPMENT COLLISIONS-

- ✓ Driving too fast especially when turning or pulling a heavy load.
- ✓ Driving partially over the center line
- ✓ Running into a tree or other fixed object
- ✓ Drivers are young and inexperienced at driving when pulling heavy loads

Signage-

Place a slow-moving vehicle (SMV) sign on the rear of the tractor or implement so that it can be clearly seen by vehicles approaching from the rear.

- When you are towing a trailer or other type of equipment attached to the tractor, a SMV is required to be mounted on the back of the towed vehicle and it must be clear and visible.
- The SMV signage requirement applies to all farm equipment traveling at a speed of 25 mph or less.

Lighting-

- Farm tractors are required to have two forward facing headlights and a red taillight which should burn continuously.
- The taillight must be visible from 500 feet under normal conditions and mounted on the left side of the tractor.
- Towed equipment requires two rear mounted red reflectors positioned to the extreme left and right.
- Farm tractors and equipment require hazard-warning lights (flashers) when operating on public roads.
- White or amber flashers are mounted on the front, and red or amber on the rear. These lights must be activated anytime that the vehicle is in operation.

Miscellaneous-

- Cleats, lugs, flashers, studs, or spikes or any other extensions of the wheel rim that could damage the surface are unlawful on public roads.
- Tire chains are allowed.

GENERAL TRAFFIC RULES-

Farm tractors and equipment operating on public roads must obey all traffic laws, lights, and signs. They also must comply with the following safety procedures:

Vehicle Operation-

- ✓ Use the turn indicator or a hand signal when changing lanes, making a turn, pulling onto a road, or slowing down to stop.
- ✓ Signal at least 100 feet before turning or stopping.
- ✓ Make sure your signals can be seen easily.
- ✓ Equip the tractor with turn signals if driving at night.
- ✓ Do not park closer than 50 feet to a railroad crossing.
- ✓ Be sure to pull completely off the road to park, and leave sufficient room for others to pass when you park off the road.
- ✓ Always use your warning flashers and other lights to signal your intentions.
- ✓ Look behind and on both sides to check the position of other vehicles before you make a turn and maintain the correct lane when you do turn.

EQUIPMENT INSPECTION AND CONDITIONS-

A daily inspection of the equipment should be performed before you start to work each morning.

- Equipment should be in compliance with the manufacturer's instruction manual.
- Tractors should have at least a five lb., type ABC fire extinguisher mounted for emergency use. Combines and harvest equipment should have at least a ten lb., type ABC fire extinguisher (two is better).
- Lighting system must be on good working order.
- Brakes operational and in good condition.
- Tires in good condition and properly inflated.
- Hitches are sturdy and in good working order.
- Safety chains are present for use with towed equipment.
- Shields and guards are in good condition and are in place on the equipment.
- Seatbelts are present and in working order on the tractors with the Rollover Protective Structure (ROPS).
- SMVs are mounted on all equipment that travel on public roads and are clear and visible.

OPERATOR RESPONSIBILITIES-

- Respect the university's policy on abstaining from alcohol, drugs, and prescription drugs during working hours.
- Respect the university rules and regulations.
- Abstain from illegal acts and horse play.

Ted Gordon-Risk Mgmt. / Loss Control Mgr.
MAFES / EXTENSION

Excerpts: Texas Department of Insurance/Safety
Department of safety/insurance www.gemplers.com

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ACT SAFELY

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