

Tractor safety training guide

437-004-3430 Training for Agriculture Tractor Operators

(1) Training. Train all employees who drive an agricultural tractor about the operating practices below and about any other practices peculiar to the work environment (see footnote). Do this training at the time of initial assignment of driving duties and at least annually after that.

(a) Securely fasten your seat belt if the tractor has a ROPS.

- Discuss correct usage with folding ROPS.
- Discuss high-risk activities (highway, loaders, etc.)
- _____

(b) Where possible, avoid operating the tractor near ditches, embankments, and holes.

- Encourage drivers to use extra caution if they need to drive near these areas.
- Remind drivers about the principles of risk management (people, money, law).
- Ask for examples of high-risk areas around the farm, and describe the ones that aren't brought up in discussion.
- _____

(c) Reduce speed when turning, crossing slopes, and on rough, slick, or muddy surfaces.

- Ask experienced operators to describe what can go wrong and how to minimize problems.
- Tractor may "push" and may not end up where the operator wants it to go.
- Turning too fast can cause a tractor to tip over.
- _____

(d) Stay off slopes too steep for safe operation.

- How steep is too steep depends on the tractor and the conditions; discuss matching the machine to the job.
- Remind your drivers of the challenging locations where they will be working.
- Remind your drivers what to do if they lose traction on a hill (Hard braking is generally not a good choice.)
- _____

Note: Bulleted (■) items are not specifically stated in the OR-OSHA code, but are suggested talking points during driver training. Extra blank line(s) are for entry of additional site-specific items you'd like to include in your training.

(e) Watch where you are going, especially at row ends, on roads, and around trees.

- Not just operators are at risk of being hurt. Many tractor-related injuries occur to pedestrians (workers, visitors, and family members).
- Remind operators of the actual places where they may have trouble with reduced visibility.
- _____

(f) Do not permit others to ride unless there is a safe seat.

- Remind drivers what will happen if a rider slips off (They can be run over by a tire.)
- It is the driver's responsibility to stop others from riding.
- _____

(g) Operate the tractor smoothly—no jerky turns, starts, or stops.

- Some tractors can backflip from their own power if the clutch is released too quickly.
- Maintenance and down time contribute to getting behind schedule.
- _____

(h) Hitch only to the drawbar and hitch points recommended by the tractor manufacturer.

- Attaching above the center point of the rear axle—"high hitching"—increases the risk of a backflip event.
- Minimize risk while hitching implements.
- Use safety chains and secure hitch pins.
- _____

(i) When the tractor is stopped, set brakes securely and use park lock if available.

- Be sure each operator understands the correct way to park each tractor, as this varies from machine to machine.
- Whenever possible, avoid parking the tractor in a place where it could roll away.
- There is a long history of operators trying to chase down runaway tractors, with tragic results. People are more valuable than machines.
- _____

■ "Other practices peculiar to the work environment" will be different for each farm, but some common considerations include:

- Loaders, attachments, and implements
- Public roadway operations
- Physical hazards in the work area
- Condition of the steps
- Work practices (maintaining three points of contact)
- PTO guarding
- Hearing protection
- Distractions
- Fatigue issues
- _____