

Safe Rural Roads



Each year too many farm equipment and vehicle collisions take place, often during spring planting or fall harvest seasons. Tractors pulling large implements can take up much of narrow rural roads. Other vehicle drivers often get impatient with the slow moving machinery.

Collisions between farm implements and other vehicles can result in large costs in equipment and vehicle loss. Tragically, they also result in the loss of life, usually to the vehicle driver and occupants. Rural roads result in more deaths per mile than urban roads.

Farm children often begin operating farm tractors and equipment at a young age. Teach them how to be safe while operating farm equipment or as a vehicle driver on rural roads. The life you save may be your son's or daughter's.

RURAL ROAD HAZARDS

- Hilly, steep, and/or curvy roads making it difficult to see
- Road surfaces which may be rough, gravel, and/or dirt
- No or narrow shoulders
- Narrow width
- Livestock and wildlife present
- Limited or inadequate signage
- Farm equipment and other vehicles sharing the same road

MACHINERY HAZARDS

- Large farm implements may cross the middle of the road
- Moves at a slower pace than regular traffic
- Heavy weight creates a problem if a tire goes over the road's edge and begins to roll
- Loud machinery can hinder the ability of the operator to hear oncoming traffic

STANDARD VEHICLE HAZARDS

- Faster speeds make it difficult to react when coming upon slower equipment
- Smaller in size, weight, and height makes them more difficult to see by equipment operators
- If the vehicle operator is not familiar with farm equipment, they may not know how to pass safely.



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CHECKLIST FOR FARMERS OPERATING MACHINERY

- Slow-Moving Vehicle (SMV) emblems maintained, bright, and clean
- Equipment lighting is working
- Signal with lights before making turns, especially when pulling right to make a wide left hand turn
- Drive at a reasonable speed
- Use lower speeds on slopes to prevent rollovers
- Check mirrors to stay aware of ditches, the center of the road, and other vehicles
- Check hitch pins if hauling implements
- Avoid travel during dusk and dawn when visibility is reduced
- No passengers on farm equipment
- Pilot car escorts farm equipment that is wide and/or high

TIPS FOR STANDARD VEHICLE DRIVERS

- Take special caution during peak farming seasons, usually spring and fall.
- Never pass farm equipment while in no-passing zones
- Slow down and be patient
- When passing slower large farm equipment, use turn signals to let the equipment driver know you are passing

Whether a farm equipment operator or a standard vehicle driver, know your state laws and regulations. Follow these rules so neither is putting the other at risk when sharing rural roads.

Scan QR codes using your smart phone's camera to access the links.

Additional Resources



I-CASH
Rural Roadway Safety



Tractor Safety & Rural
Roadway Safety Video

