



MSU DAWG TRACKS

It's finally quit raining (*well at least it had when I originally wrote this*). With drier conditions and warmer weather, folks are getting a chance to start their field work again. The largest number of injuries on a farm are caused by tractors and equipment. The most common types of tractor accidents include rollovers and caught by moving parts, but don't forget about those hydraulic lines and watching out for others.

Avoid rollovers by taking action to avoid dangerous situations.

- Stay away from steep ditches & drop-offs. A good rule of thumb is to stay the same distance away from the edge, as the drop-off is deep.
- Don't overload the tractor or attachments.
- Carry loads as low to the ground as possible.
- Always hitch to the drawbar; anything higher than this point may cause the tractor to tip backward during operation.
- Apply brakes evenly, locking them together, when on pavement or other such hard surfaces.
- Avoid driving sideways along a hill.
- Go slow when making turns, especially with a loader bucket. This extra weight will cause a shift in the center of gravity, making rollovers even more likely.

Rollover protection systems (ROPS) will not prevent rollover accidents; however, it will help protect you if a rollover accident occurs. When operating a tractor with ROPS always wear your seat belt.

One of the most dangerous items on a tractor is the PTO.

- Keep all parts of the PTO system shielded and guarded. Repair or replace these guards immediately when they become damaged.
- Never step over a rotating PTO shaft or be near a rotating PTO with loose clothing or long hair.

Another way power is transferred from a tractor to an attachment is through hydraulics.

- Repair or replace damaged hydraulic hoses and fittings.
- Keep the hose connections free of dirt and dust.
- Never use your hand to check hydraulic hoses for leaks.
- Be aware that a hydraulics system can fail without warning. Never stand or work under equipment that has been raised unless it is supported by another securing device.

Runovers are also high on the list of tractor dangers:

- If an attachment or implement is blocking your view, shut down and walk around the tractor to make sure no one is in the area.
- Never let anyone stand between the tractor and an attachment or implement. They could be run over by the tractor or crushed between the tractor and attachment or implement.
- Do not have extra riders on a tractor, unless there is an approved seat for this.
- Never allow anyone ride/stand on the draw bar, axle housing, side links of a three-point hitch, rear wheel fenders or attachments.

Before dismounting a tractor:

- Lower all attached equipment to the ground.
- Move all controls to neutral, lock controls (if so equipped) and set the parking brake.
- Make sure the PTO (power take off) is disengaged or off & wait for all moving parts to stop.

For more info contact:
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Sources: <http://nasdonline.org/1919/d001874/tractor-safety.html>