



Blind Spots and Agricultural Equipment

Potential hazard

Serious injuries and death can result from agricultural equipment running over or striking nearby workers, family members or visitors to the farm. Poor sight lines and lack of visibility, commonly known as “blind spots,” exist on many pieces of agricultural equipment. Types of agricultural equipment with blind spots include, but are not limited to: combines, tractors, sprayers and trucks. Risk is highest when equipment is backing up or moving in areas where space is limited and the turning radius is tight.

Examples of blind spots found in agricultural equipment



Photos used with permission from M-C North America (www.m-cna.com).

How to control the hazard

In order to reduce the risk of injuries or death due to being run-over or struck by agricultural equipment, it is critical that farm owners develop and deliver safe work practices on their farm. To protect everyone on the farm:

- Develop and implement safe work procedures. Train workers, family members and visitors on the farm in the safe work procedures.
- Control the hazard through the use of engineering controls.
- Use appropriate Personal Protective Equipment.
- Ensure children are educated on the hazard and provided with a safe play area.

(see next page)

SAFE Work Manitoba contact information:

Winnipeg: 204-957-SAFE (7233)

Toll-Free: 1-855-957-SAFE (7233)

Publications and resources available at: safemanitoba.com/farms



Safe work procedures

- Ensure all equipment operators engage in a walk-around check before moving equipment.
 - Keep a reminder decal on windows/doors, such as the SAFE Farms 'All Clear' sticker.
- Ensure operators know where blind spots exist on the equipment.
- Develop Safe Operating Procedures for the equipment.
- Ensure workers, family members and visitors are trained to recognize blind spots on agricultural equipment and to avoid entering these areas.
- Instruct workers, family members (including older children), and visitors on safe ways to approach agricultural equipment. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - Before approaching equipment, make eye contact with operator and ensure the equipment operator is always aware of your intentions.
 - When travelling on roadways, always be cautious of blind spots, especially during turns.
- Ensure there is an established means of communication between bystander and equipment operator (e.g. hand signals, flags, two way radios, cell phones, etc.).

Engineering controls

- Provide warning devices such as back-up alarms and flashing lights on mobile equipment to help warn people of danger when equipment is moving.
 - Warning devices alone are not always sufficient to ensure protection, especially during busy times on the farm.
 - Where there are multiple pieces of equipment in use, it may be difficult to hear back-up alarms and determine which pieces of equipment are in motion.
- Whenever possible, plan the project to avoid the need to back up equipment.
- Reduce foot traffic in areas where agricultural equipment is to be working.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Ensure workers, family members and visitors wear high visibility safety apparel and any other appropriate personal protective equipment when around agricultural equipment that is in use.

Educate children and provide safe play areas

- Educate children on the hazards of agricultural equipment in motion.
 - Teach children that agricultural equipment is not for play, whether it is running or not.
 - Identify areas of the farm that children must stay away from.
- Provide a fenced-in, designated safe play area for children on your farm.

Supervise young children at all times.

Reference to legal requirements under workplace safety and health legislation:

- Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Act, W210
- Manitoba Workplace Safety and Health Regulation, M.R. 217/2006
 - Part 22: Powered Mobile Equipment

Additional workplace safety and health information available at: www.safemanitoba.com

- SAFE Farms Bulletin No. 14 – Safe Tractor Operation
- SAFE Farms Bulletin No. 6 – Safety Risk to Farm Tractor Operators: ROPS Certification
- Creating Safe Play Areas on Farms, Fourth Edition. National Children's Center for Rural and Agricultural Health and Safety.
- SAFE Farms 'All Clear' Sticker – Reminds equipment operators to perform a walk-around check to make sure no family members, children, workers or visitors are in their blind spots before moving equipment.

Additional workplace safety and health information available at: safemanitoba.com

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