



Tractor Safety - Operator

Farm equipment is not always designed with safety in mind, and tractors are especially dangerous. According to the National Safety Council, tractor accidents are the leading cause of injury and death among farmers and farm workers. The National Agricultural Tractor Safety Initiative reports that tractors cause nearly 130 deaths annually. To prevent serious injury or fatality, please review the safety measures on the back. Report any tractor safety issues to your supervisor.

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- Know your tractor and its implements before operating the equipment. Read and understand the operator's manual, and speak with your supervisor if you have any questions or concerns. Never drive a tractor that you are unfamiliar with.
- Keep your tractor in good condition. Inspecting the vehicle prior to each use will help you identify and correct hazards, such as keeping the steps clean to help reduce slips and falls.
- Wear your seatbelt if the tractor has roll-over protection (ROP). Most tractor fatalities are caused by overturns. Never remove your seatbelt or stand up while driving.
- Be familiar with terrain and potential hazards, such as potholes, ditches, steep slopes and soft shoulders that can overturn your tractor. Slow down when turning to help prevent tip overs, and avoid driving on roadways if possible.
- Only start the engine with the ignition key. Never attempt to bypass the ignition mechanism to start the tractor. Don't start the tractor in a garage or closed shed; this will help prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Always keep the power take off (PTO) of the implement properly guarded and never walk over, through or between the tractor and the implement. Also, make sure your tractor has a shield over the PTO.
- Always shut down your tractor when leaving the seat, and set the brakes. A runaway vehicle can be deadly. Always take the ignition key with you when the tractor is not in use.
- Do not wear loose-fitting clothing or keep long hair down when driving or working with a tractor and implements. Clothing and long hair can easily wrap around moving parts and cause serious injuries or death.
- Wear non-skid shoes to help prevent slips and falls.
- If your tractor does not have a cabin, make sure to use respiratory and eye protection to help reduce exposure to dust particulates generated during dry conditions.
- Never refuel your tractor when the engine is hot or running. Let it cool off. This also applies to checking and filling the radiator with fluid.
- Extra riders should never be allowed on tractors; they can easily fall and be crushed by the vehicle or its implements.
- Do not drive if you have been under the influence of alcohol or drugs. This also applies to prescription drugs that can inhibit your ability to drive a vehicle. If you are taking prescription medication, please talk to your supervisor before driving a tractor.
- Always keep a functioning fire extinguisher and a first-aid kit available in your tractor.
- Never rush. Injuries can be prevented when you take the time to do the job safely.

