

Personal column
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Remember SAFETY during Wheat Harvest!!!

Wow.....the last few days have definitely been “wheat harvest weather” with the hot temperatures. The 2024 wheat harvest is in full swing in some areas with others just gearing up in the Post Rock Extension District and NC Kansas.

During wheat harvest season, countless hours will be spent in combines, tractors, trucks and other equipment by farmers and workers who will be transporting large equipment on our roads and highways. Some workers may be young, new or inexperienced, so it’s always a good idea to remember safety precautions and reinforce the importance of safety on the farm.

Agriculture ranks among the nation’s most hazardous industry! Farmers are at very high risk for fatal and nonfatal injuries, and farming is one of the few industries in which family members, who often share the work and live on the premises, are also at risk for fatal and nonfatal injuries.

Harvest season can be a very stressful time for farm families, so it is important to remember these simple guidelines to keep everyone safe.

- Make sure that anyone operating the combine and other harvest machinery, has been trained to use it and is aware of potential hazards.
- Before approaching machinery for maintenance or inspection, make sure it is shut down with the engine off, the key removed, and all moving parts stopped completely.
- Keep bystanders away from harvesting equipment and never allow extra riders. One seat means one rider.
- Remember for everyone to share the road! When it is necessary to move heavy, slow-moving equipment on public roads, try to pick a time with light traffic flow to minimize contact with traffic.
- Make sure all the appropriate safety lights work properly and safety reflectors are visible to other motorists.
- Always use a Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) emblem on vehicles that travel less than 25 miles per hour.
- Be sure and take breaks often to prevent fatigue and stress which can prevent accidents.
- The temperatures have been extremely high so it is very important to drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration.

Remember, it only takes seconds for a farm accident to happen! We wish you a safe and great harvest!