

TRACTOR SAFETY

Between 2001 - 2004, 35% of traumatic deaths on Australian farms were associated with plant and equipment. Two-thirds of these were tractor related. Tractor deaths and injury occurs from tractor runovers, rollovers and entanglement in power take-off shafts (PTOs). Design features for tractors, such as rollbars, neutral start switches and safe operator access have improved the situation, but injury events continue to occur.

TRACTOR ROLLOVER

Tractor rollover deaths have declined in the past decade, with more widespread retro-fitting of rollbars (ROPS) to second-hand tractors. However, not every tractor has a roll-bar and rollover deaths still account for around 30% of all tractor deaths.



- Fit a Roll Over Protection Structure (R.O.P.S.) to all tractors to help prevent injury to the operator in the event of a tractor roll-over**
- Where tractors are fitted with front end loaders, fitting a falling object protective structure will prevent injury to the operator from falling loads, such as round hay bales
- Do not allow passengers to ride on tractors
- Do not overload tractors. Check tractor User Manuals for correct tractor ballast

TRACTOR RUNOVER

Tractor runovers are the leading cause of tractor-related deaths, responsible for around 40% of fatal tractor injuries. Older farmers are at greater risk of tractor runover. Incidents are often associated with maintenance, jump-starting, checking or operating implements and alighting moving tractors. Some runovers involve children.



- Keep tractor steps and handrails in good repair or replace old tractor steps with safer tractor access
- Fit steps which enable access outside the line of the rear wheel of the tractor.** A diagram and free guide is available at www.farmsafe.org.au
- Do not get on or off a moving tractor
- Do not jump start the tractor while standing on the ground or in front of the tyres
- Maintain the hand brake in good repair. Engage the handbrake or place the transmission in Park before getting on or off the tractor

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TRACTOR POWER TAKE OFF SHAFTS

Tractor operators and bystanders are dying and being severely injured after being entangled in tractor and implement PTO shafts - on post hole diggers, slashers, feed mixers and chaffers.

- Fit a guard to all machinery Power Take-Off (PTO) shafts
- Regularly check and replace old or worn PTO shaft guards
- Make sure that the tractor master guard and implement guards are fitted before operating any PTO powered machinery**
- Keep all bystanders away from operating PTO powered machinery



MAINTENANCE AND TRAINING

Poor tractor maintenance and lack of safe tractor operator training contribute to tractor accidents.

- Always keep tractor brakes, lights and electrics well maintained
- Keep the engine free of rubbish. Clean the tractor regularly, especially during slashing or harvesting, to reduce the risk of fire
- Check and replace all guards after maintenance and before operating the tractor
- Ensure all tractor operators are trained in their safe operation
- Only tow loads attached to the tractor drawbar.
- Carry a fire extinguisher and a first aid kit on each tractor



For farm safety checklists and other information on farm safety risks and controls, go to aghealth.sydney.edu.au or contact:

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