

# AGRICULTURAL SAFETY TOPICS

## Preventing Tractor Runovers

### Objective:

To understand and prevent four types of runovers .

### Background:

Nearly 18.7% of all agriculture fatalities in Ontario are due to tractor runovers, an average of 4 to 5 preventable deaths annually.\*

Tractor manufacturers have attempted to reduce the risk of runover fatalities by designing safety interlock systems that require operators to be sitting in the seat with the tractor gear in neutral or park before the tractor will start.

Runovers are often the result of operators getting in a hurry, becoming careless, taking shortcuts or forgetting details that ensure their safety and the safety of bystanders.

### Four Types of Runovers

- Tractor Unmanned – Examples: bypass starting\*, left running or unblocked on a slope
- Operator Falls – Examples: falling from, or being thrown from the tractor, forgetting to use the parking brake
- Bystanders – Neglecting to observe bystanders who may be in the way or slip and fall underneath the tractor or towed equipment
- Passengers – extra rider falls\*

\* **Bypass starting** is the act of starting the tractor by shorting across the starter terminals while standing on the ground between the front and rear wheels. If the tractor is mistakenly left in gear, the tractor will start, buildup hydraulic pressure and lurch running over the operator before they have time to react.

\* **Extra rider** – Except for tractors equipped with an instructor seat, most tractors are only designed for one operator and absolutely no riders. Because there is no safety device, such as a seatbelt, to protect an extra rider, they are particularly vulnerable to falling off and becoming injured by tractor wheels or towed equipment.

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## AGRICULTURAL SAFETY TOPICS – Preventing Tractor Runovers

### Tips to Avoid Tractor Runovers

- Never bypass or jumpstart a tractor without ensuring it is out of gear.
- ALWAYS start a tractor from the operator's seat.
- Never dismount a tractor while in motion.
- Shut off tractor and apply parking brakes before dismounting.
- Slow down on rough ground or where there might be hidden obstacles.
- Survey unknown fields before starting work to identify potential hazards.
- Ensure decks are clear of clutter.
- Check for bystanders before starting or putting the tractor in motion.
- There should never be an extra rider on a tractor.
- Extra riders should only be present during training under a controlled environment. Training seats should ONLY be used for training sessions.
- Operators should take frequent breaks to maintain alertness.
- Ensure all operators are thoroughly trained and aware of potential hazards.

### Remember:

- Do a circle check to ensure no one is in harms way
- Follow the correct operating procedures
- Follow equipment operator training
- Remove distractions
- Make sure no bystanders are in harm's way
- **No riders**

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### Sources

\* CAIR Agriculture-related fatalities Regional comparison 2006-2015

Safe Tractor Operation: Run Over Prevention – David W. Smith, Extension Safety Program, AgriLIFE EXTENSION, Texas A&M System

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