Safety for Agricultural Workers

A work-related hazard for workers in the agricultural sector is grain bin entrapment. In fact, this topic is central to the theme of the 2011 Farm Safety & Health Week (Sept. 18-24), "Safety Counts—Your Community Depends On It." Deaths and injuries in grain bins continue to rise even as other types of agricultural accidents have decreased, perhaps because it is difficult for workers to grasp how quickly grain entrapment can occur. In only seconds a person can become helpless in flowing grain, and modern automatic conveyors can completely cover a 6-foot-tall man in grain in 15 seconds.

National Education Center for Agricultural Safety - www.necasag.org

We think of agricultural safety as related to activities on the farm, but one important aspect of it occurs elsewhere: approximately 200 crashes between farm implements and motor vehicles happen every year on public roads. Young drivers on Iowa's rural roads—and our state has many—will benefit from safety education materials produced for use by driver education instructors. Sponsored by the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT), the new 10-minute video entitled "Rural Road Crashes: They're Preventable!" comes with a discussion guide, a quiz, and a coaching guide (useful to parents teaching their children to drive).

IDOT - for questions or ordering: email ods@dot.iowa.gov or call (515) 237-3180.

Dangerous Shortcuts

Be on the lookout for "normalization of deviance," a technical name for a common human experience. When bypassing one of the steps of a safety-related procedure produces no immediate negative result, the shortcut can start to seem like a good idea (especially if it saves time) and become the "norm."

safetyXchange (When Shortcuts Become the Norm) - www.safetyxchange.org/training-and-leadership/shortcuts-norm

Feeling overheated? There's an app for that...

OSHA now offers a Heat Safety Tool application for any mobile device using an Android platform. The "app" enables the heat index to be monitored at a worksite. In English or Spanish, the app calculates the heat index and displays measures to protect against heat-related illness. Versions for BlackBerry and iPhone users are being developed. OSHA has also issued information to help employers protect workers from heat illness.

OSHA (Heat Safety Tool) - www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_index/heat_app.html

IOWA WORKLIFE FORUM

♦ an online forum of ideas and strategies to address employee health and wellness♦

Tuesday, September 27, 8-9am
"Fostering Change Through Workplace Wellness Challenges"

Learn about Live Healthy Iowa (LHI), a program that promotes positive lifestyle change through friendly competition and support in the workplace (www.livehealthyiowa.org).

Presenter: Nicole Bruce
Health Initiatives Director
Live Healthy Iowa

Sponsored by: Healthier Workforce Center for Excellence
To connect: www.public-health.uiowa.edu/HWCE/current-initiatives/IowaWorklifeForum.html (or contact matthew-lozier@uiowa.edu, 319/467-4505)