



20 July 2009

Safety on the farm

Monday 20 July marks the start of National Farm Safety Week. With around 100 deaths a year from farm accidents across Australia, Ambulance is urging the rural community to maintain safe work practices on the farm, to try to prevent serious injury or even death from accidents.



Ambulance recommends that you undertake a risk assessment of your property to identify hazardous areas. High-risk situations include:

- Tractors / heavy machinery
- Noisy machines that interfere with hearing levels
- Chainsaw use
- Horse and motorbike riding
- Use of chemicals.

You should always take extra precautions in these areas to ensure that you, your family and staff remain safe. Ambulance offers the following tips to help prevent injury:

- **Never let people**, especially children, stand on the side of a tractor
- Only allow appropriately qualified and experienced people to operate farm machinery and vehicles
- Always attempt to drive tractors and other vehicles on level ground
- When towing tall farm equipment look up for power lines, electricity can jump up to three metres from powerlines to machinery
- Install approved rollover protective structures on tractors
- Wear ear protection at all times when using noisy machinery, and eye protection when welding or sawing



- Avoid loose fitting clothes and keep long hair tied back when working close to moving machinery parts and rotating implements
- Always wear a helmet when riding a horse or motorbike
- Leave chemicals in their original container, and store them in accordance with the manufacturers instructions
- Educate children from an early age as to the dangers on the farm

Importantly, always remember:

- For any medical emergency **dial '000' and ask for Ambulance.** Do not attempt to drive yourself to hospital if seriously ill or injured.
- If working alone on an isolated part of the farm, always let someone know where you will be, and the approximate time you will return. Take a communication device such as mobile phone, satellite phone or EPIRB with you in case of emergency
- Country roads are not always clearly marked, so make sure you can give the emergency operator accurate directions, which include things like cattle gates, obvious landmarks and gates. Make sure your property is clearly marked. Put clear markings into and around your property to make it easily identifiable to emergency crews.
- If you think someone has been poisoned by any chemicals, medication or plants, call the Poisons Information Centre on 13-11-26
- Attend a first aid course with an accredited provider – this could help you to save a life.

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For further information or local media opportunities please contact Ambulance Media on (02) 9320 7796.