



IRSHC Safety Harvest

NEW FACES, RENEWED FOCUS

May/June, 1999

For more than 50 years, the Indiana Rural Safety and Health Council (IRSHC) has been committed to reducing the incidence of injuries and occupational illnesses on farms and in rural Indiana communities. Improvements in agricultural safety have been dramatic since IRSHC was founded, but there is still room for growth. Each year an estimated 1 out of every nine Indiana farm families experiences an injury requiring medical attention. That's why IRSHC remains an important partner in rural Indiana life, and the importance of our mission is the reason for growth and change within the organization.

NEW PRESIDENT, EDITOR

IRSHC recently elected a new president, Jim Rink. Jim is Vice President for Community Relations with Farm Bureau. He is committed to making IRSHC into a vital, well-known organization. The Safety Harvest also has a new editor, Paul Jones. He is a technical editor/media developer with the Breaking New Ground Resource Center at Purdue University. The format for the newsletter itself is also evolving.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

IRSHC should no longer be the best kept secret in Indiana. Therefore, the Safety Harvest Newsletter will now be published bimonthly instead of quarterly. We're also

trimming the size and focusing on information you can really use. Included will be articles by safety experts, safety tips, interviews, and accident facts. Another way of spreading the safety message is our new full-color brochure that contains not only information about the Council but valuable facts about Indiana farm fatalities as well.

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COLLABORATION IS KEY

Rural safety is an issue too big for one group to adequately handle; the task is too large and the mission is too important. With that in mind, IRSHC coordinated a Farm Safety Summit on March 25 at the Farm Bureau Building in Indianapolis. IRSHC is interested in working with other groups who have an interest in rural Indiana, including Indiana Safe Kids, Farm Bureau, Indiana Prairie Farmer, 4-H, and FFA to build a more unified effort in addressing rural safety and health issues.

IRSHC BENEFITS YOU.

As someone involved with Indiana's rural community, you benefit from the Council's work,

and we want your help. If you're not a member, join now. If you are a member, come to our meetings and activities. See the list of upcoming events below or contact us at 765-494-5013.

The Call to Action

ATTEND AN IRSHC EVENT

IRSHC meets on a regular basis at the Farm Bureau Building in Indianapolis. Please join us at 10:30 A.M. to address issues relevant to rural Indiana. Lunch is also provided. Once again, IRSHC will host an exhibit at the Indiana State Fair and coordinate activities for National Farm Safety and Health Week.

Our tentative meeting schedule for the rest of 1999 is:

April 22	May 27
July 22	August 26
September 23	October 28

1999 Indiana State Fair:
August 11-22

National Farm Safety and Health Week: September 13-19

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For membership information or to comment about Safety Harvest, contact Paul Jones, Editor.

EAST WINDS + SNOW = GRAIN BIN DANGER

The combined winter weather phenomena of east winds and plentiful snow are creating a potential safety hazard for Indiana farmers, and grain bins are the danger zones. To understand the problem, some background on bin design is helpful.

BIN VENT PLACEMENT

Winds in Indiana usually come from the southwest. Therefore, vents on grain bins are normally located on the east side of the bins. This placement discourages moisture from entering during storms. However, this winter's easterly winds have foiled conventional engineering wisdom, and moisture, in the form of snow, has entered through the vents on many bins.

CRUSTY PROBLEM

As most farmers know, moisture and grain don't mix. When rain or melted snow come in contact with grain, the result is mold. As the



grain spoils, a hardened layer of crusty grain forms. This caked mass can break into large chunks and clog an auger when grain is unloaded.

THE UNACCEPTABLE RISK

Even with an abundance of warnings, too many farmers make the often fatal mistake of entering grain bins without taking proper precautions. When a clog occurs and the grain flow slows, some farmers enter bins and attempt to dislodge the clogs from the auger. However, their success can turn to

tragedy when the grain flow resumes and the farmer is pulled beneath a column of flowing grain. Suffocation can occur in less than a minute as the victim inhales mouthfuls of grain while gasping for air. Over 90% of fully engulfed victims do not survive.

SAFETY STRATEGY

The most important prevention measure is to never enter a grain storage structure with the unloading auger in operation and/or if crusted grain is present. If there is any concern about the condition of the grain, have at least one person assist you.

If you would like more information on grain engulfment hazards, safety tips, or rescue procedures, or if you can provide information about an engulfment experience, contact Doug Kingman at Purdue's Agricultural Safety and Health Program: 765-494-5013.

IN THE NEXT **H**ARVEST...

Tractor accidents are by far the leading cause of death on Indiana farms. And every year, hundreds of farm families nationwide are devastated by tractor-related deaths.

In our next issue, *Safety Harvest* reviews a new resource developed by Purdue professor Roger Tormoehlen to combat tractor accidents. **Tractor Operation: Gearing up for Safety** is an interactive CD-ROM program designed specifically to teach the fundamentals of tractor safety. We'll also include ordering information.

IRSHC ASSISTS WITH ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

Do you have a disability or know someone who does? To help meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, IRSHC is collaborating with more than 20 other organizations to host the *Assistive Technology in the Heartland Conference and Exposition*.

The purpose of this event is to enhance the quality of life for individuals with disabilities through the expanded use of assistive technology. Since there are many types of disabilities and assistive technologies, *Assistive Technology in the Heartland* will feature four main tracks in which to address specific technology needs:

school, work, home, and play. There will also be intensive sessions covering such topics as technology for young children, making your own assistive technology solutions, computer accessibility, accessible gardening, and obtaining funding for assistive technologies. Special training will also be provided for individuals working with farmers who have disabilities.

Assistive Technology in the Heartland will be held in Indianapolis on April 25-29, 1999. For more information or a registration form, call the Breaking New Ground Resource Center at 1-800-825-4264.