

# IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

## Extension and Outreach

September 13, 2016

### Contact:

Charles Schwab  
Professor of Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Extension Specialist  
Iowa State University  
515-294-4131  
[cvschwab@iastate.edu](mailto:cvschwab@iastate.edu)

## SLIPS AND FALLS CAN BE DEADLY

### Use caution when working around elevated workstations

AMES, Iowa – September 18-24 is National Farm Safety and Health Week, and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach wants farmers to focus their attention on potential slips and falls which can be linked to serious injuries.

Charles Schwab, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach safety specialist, says slips and falls are a major cause of injuries throughout the year but especially common around machinery, equipment, and structures during harvest.

According to Schwab, there are simple steps to follow that can help farmers avoid slips and falls:

- Always consider the height from which you work.
- Before climbing on farm machine or structures, scrape mud or manure off shoes.
- Keep the work platform, foot plate, and steps free of debris.
- Use shoes or boots with slip-resistant soles and heels.
- Dismount equipment only when it has come to a complete stop.

Tops of combines are 12-14 feet off the ground and the operator's platform usually 6-8 feet above the ground. Ladders on grain bin can exceed 30 feet. A fall to the ground or onto other machinery can result in back injuries, serious sprains, broken bones or death.

Secondary hazards on work or walk surfaces increases the possibility of falls.

“Mud, grease or loose grain can make work surfaces slippery,” Schwab says. “That's why it's important to keep shoes clean, and always keep those walking surfaces free of debris.”

Employ grab bars or railings when mounting and dismounting. It is important when mounting and dismounting to keep three points of contact: two hand holds and one foot, or two feet and one hand hold at all times. This three point connection reduces the potential of a fall. Also avoid carrying items in your hands while climbing ladders or equipment steps.

Related Publications:

<https://store.extension.iastate.edu/Product/Evaluate-equipment-for-dangers-Safe-Farm>

###