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IOWA FARM SAFETY AND HEALTH WEEK

The Iowa Farm Safety and Health Week promotion is held in conjunction with the National Farm Safety and Health Week, which is also September 18-24, 2011. The national theme is “Safety Counts - Your Community Depends On It.” The event is coordinated by the National Safety Council and supported by other organizations and groups with interest in agricultural safety.

Agriculture has the highest annual death rates for workers in the nation at 25.4 deaths per 100,000 workers, surpassing all the other industries including mining, construction, and manufacturing. It is 9 times higher than the average death rate for all industries combined. This high death rate is why Iowans must use safe farming practices during harvest and throughout the year. This special recognition week began with President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the first proclamation for farm safety in 1944 because the high injury rate in agriculture impacted the war effort. We are still using it to reinforce the safety message during this hazardous time of harvest.

In Iowa, farm safety efforts are a unique partnership between various organizations. As president of the Iowa Farm Safety Council, I represent safety volunteers in Iowa that come together under the umbrella of the council. The Iowa Farm Safety Council with their volunteers strives to increase knowledge about agricultural hazards and dangers.

The Iowa Farm Safety Council encourages Iowans to make better safety and health decisions this harvest season and during next year. You can prepare to prevent serious injuries and death by:

- avoiding flowing grain suffocation hazards while unloading bins and wagons,
- keeping a watchful eye out for bridged grain conditions,
- making smart decisions while assigning tasks to youth,
- using and maintaining the slow moving vehicle emblem SMV correctly, and
- retrofitting tractors with rollover protective structures, ROPS.

Join the Iowa Farm Safety Council and the National Safety Council to participate in the 68th annual National Farm Safety and Health Week September 18-24, 2011. We also urge Iowans to support the Iowa Farm Safety and Health Day for Children and Youth on September 21, 2011. During this time please encourage others to adopt safe practices and behaviors as we prepare to prevent injuries during this harvest season.

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