

P.O. Box 278
Emory, TX 75440
(903)-473-4580

12-09-14

To: Rains County Leader

From: Stephen Gowin
CEA-Agriculture

Monthly Safety Blast
Farm Equipment Road Safety

*Monthly Safety Blasts are produced by the
Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education.*

As we finish our hay baling season, we begin to start thinking about feeding hay to hungry cattle during the winter months. During this time of year it gets dark really early, about the time when many cattle producers are finishing their daily chores and feeding cattle. This can be very dangerous to many motorists down country roads and farm to market highways.

With the boundaries of rural and urban America blending more and more everyday, it is important for all motorists to be aware and cautious of farm equipment on the roads. According to the National Safety Council, approximately 1/3 of fatal tractor accidents occur on public roads. In order to decrease the chance of a collision, motorists should follow these 6 rules of the road.

Slow down when you see a piece of agricultural equipment. Most farm equipment is designed to travel at speeds of only 15-25 mph.

Watch for Slow-Moving-Vehicle (SMV) signs. SMVs are required for vehicles traveling less than 25 mph.

Watch for hand signals. Just because a tractor veers right does not mean the operator is pulling over to allow someone to pass. The size of farm equipment often requires wide turns.





Pass farm equipment cautiously. Even when passing safely and legally, the turbulence created by a vehicle may cause the machinery to become unstable. Do not expect operators to drive their equipment onto the shoulder of the road. Driving with one set of tires on loose-surfaced shoulders increases the risk of overturn.

Watch for flashing amber lights. This type of light often marks the far right and left of farm equipment. Also watch for reflective tape marking extremities and sides of equipment.

Remember that agricultural operators have a right to drive their equipment on the road.

Consider these *Fast Facts* next time you encounter agricultural equipment on the road!

- A car moving at 50 mph has less than 10 seconds to avoid a collision with a tractor moving 20 mph that is 400 feet ahead.
- It only takes 5 seconds for a motorist driving 55 mph to close a gap the length of a football field when approaching a tractor moving at 15 mph.
- Nearly half of all incidents between motorists and farm implements involve one of two scenarios- the left hand turn collision or the rear-end collision.

