



Agri-SAFETY-culture NEWS

Tuesday January 1st, 2019

PRIME CONTRACTORS on the FARM



In the December issue of AgSafe Alberta's newsletter, we reviewed some tips for managing contractors on the farm. Now we will visit the obligations of work site parties and the appointment and responsibilities of prime contractors. Let's have a look at the regulatory environment surrounding prime contractors on the farm.

The Alberta Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, Regulations and Code (legislation) establishes minimum standards for healthy and safe practices in Alberta workplaces. For agricultural workplaces, the OHS legislation applies to farms and ranches with waged non-family employees. For the purposes of this article, we will consider the OHS legislation and assignment of prime contractor roles and responsibilities when construction companies have been contracted for on-farm construction projects. All work site parties must cooperate with anyone exercising a duty under the legislation. Since every farm and work site is unique, this article is for information purposes only, and it is recommended that farm owners seek legal advice when establishing contracts and on-farm construction work site agreements. It is fairly common for farms and ranches to hire contractors to complete specific jobs on the farm. Consider the various contractors and service providers that may visit the farm over the year;

- Fuel or chemical delivery agents
- Custom transportation companies: grain, milk, livestock
- Construction workers for new buildings

- Equipment mechanics
- Custom operations: harvesters, sprayers
- Veterinarians
- Suppliers

Everyone has responsibilities in the OHS legislation including employers, workers, contractors, owners, prime contractors, suppliers, service providers and more.

EMPLOYERS are responsible for:

- Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of workers.
- Ensuring workers are aware of their rights and duties under the law and are aware of any health and safety issues.
- Providing competent supervisors, training workers, and preventing violence and harassment.
- Ensuring public safety at or in the vicinity of work sites.
- Working with the joint work site health and safety committee or health and safety representative.

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FARM & RANCH SAFETY TIP

Prevention of wintery slips, trips, falls



Many work-related injuries are caused by slips, trips and falls, and winter weather can be a huge factor in creating situations that pose hazards on the farm. Working outdoors in adverse conditions increases the risk of these types of injuries. The most effective way to prevent slips, trips and falls is by being aware of your surroundings. A good place to start is by conducting a hazard assessment in the workplace to identify and correct hazards that may cause injury. Inspect equipment, clear away clutter and check for slippery or uneven surfaces as well as tripping hazards – these factors may lead to injuries. Potential hazards that you should always be aware of include wet and/or slippery surfaces that may become icy. Steep or unsafe stairways, areas with poor lighting and cluttered walkways and stairs may also pose a risk for injuries, especially in winter. Steps to avoid slip, trip, fall injuries:

- be especially careful when carrying large or heavy objects that obstruct vision

- keep sand and salt handy and use regularly to help keep walkways clear of ice
- watch for slippery surfaces and walk slowly and carefully
- wear footwear with a good non-slip tread
- be careful when working with animals that might slip and fall and injure you
- clean ice off steps and platforms and keep them clean/dry to avoid ice buildup
- be extremely cautious when climbing on and off of tractors and machinery
- keep walkways and stairs free of clutter
- ensure adequate lighting for outdoor areas
- use railings on steps and walkways
- allow extra time for chores and don't rush or run

SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

Short stories from producers who have been injured or nearly injured in a farming incident

Run-in with a Powerline

Bill got a new high-clearance sprayer on his farm. The previous sprayer that he owned had a separate control for unfolding each side of the sprayer. Their new sprayer had a single button that launched both sides to unfold at the same time. One day when Bill was setting up to spray, he pressed what he thought was the left side unfold button and he was watching the left side unfold from the driver's seat. But actually both



sides were unfolding at the same time. The right side of the sprayer, that Bill was not watching, unfolded upwards and contacted a power line. Bill saw that the line had been contacted and was going to hop out of the cab. Before touching the cab, he checked to see if the tires were still inflated and the equipment was grounded, or if the contact with the power line caused the tires to pop. He was planning to climb along the sprayer and jump off the back of the sprayer, knowing he would need to try to jump and clear the sprayer by 30 feet. Rather than risking the jump Bill tried to rock the sprayer arm back and forth and free the sprayer from the power line. He was successful at freeing the sprayer arm from the power line. There were burn mark grooves on all of the tires on the sprayer from the electrical connection. Bill considers himself lucky to be alive. After the incident, Bill realized:

- he should have checked the area better and been aware of his surroundings before unfolding the sprayer
 - circle your equipment before start-up and operation

- he should have been more familiar with his new equipment with the one button unfold command
- he also approached the equipment manufacturer and requested that the sprayer arms unfold horizontally rather than vertically to reduce the chance of contacting overhead power lines. One manufacturer listened to his suggestion and have modified how the arms open.

Bill indicated that this event changed his life forever. This was a close call but Bill now approaches all of his tasks in a different manner.



SHARE YOUR STORY: If you have a story and lessons learned from an incident that took place on your farm that you are willing to share, tell your story. Your experience may help prevent similar incidents from happening to a fellow farmer. Please send in your stories to donna@agsafeab.ca

AgSafe Alberta Society OUT AND ABOUT

The AgSafe Alberta Advisor team is out working individually with farmers and ranchers across Alberta. AgSafe Alberta will also be providing farm safety management information at the following events:

January 17: Farm safety workshop, Nanton
January 21-23: Ag Service Board Conference, Calgary
January 29: Farm Safety Information session, MD Warner
January 30: Ag Safety Night presentation, Cypress County
January 29-31: Farm Tech, Edmonton
January 30: Farm Safety Information Session, MD Taber
January 31-February 2: Annual Feeder Association, Red Deer
February 4: Catalyst Group farm safety update, Calgary
February 8-10: Ag Societies AGM, Edmonton
March 7: Farm Safety Workshop, New Norway
March 12-14: Alberta Beef Industry conference, Red Deer
March 14-16: SARDA Ag Research Ag Tradeshow, Chevalier



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR EVENT DETAILS

If you would like Ag Safe Alberta Society to attend or present at one of your upcoming

agricultural events in Alberta please email: jwacowich@agsafeab.ca with details.



YOUR SAFETY YOUR WAY

Ag Safe Alberta is an agriculture based safety organization that is results-oriented, accountable and transparent to our stakeholders with focus on continuous improvement and best practices.

The overall goal of Ag Safe Alberta is to empower farmers and ranchers to integrate practical safety management programs into their everyday operations, in order to prevent illness and injury for everyone involved on the farm.



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