



# BULLETIN

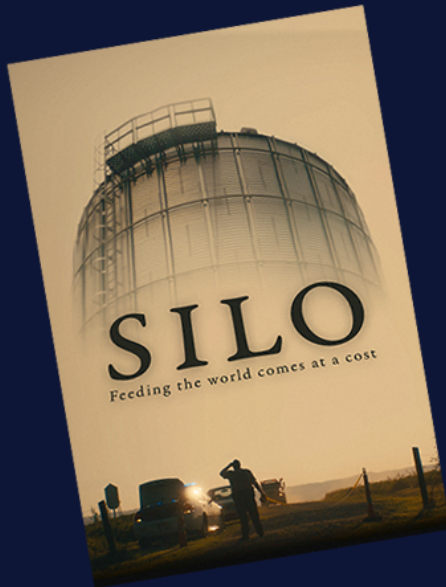
JANUARY



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- **Farm Safety Planning Virtual Sessions - sign up > [here](#) <**

● Free preview of Silo “ Inspired by true events, SILO follows a harrowing day in an American farm town. Disaster strikes when teenager Cody Rose is entrapped in a 50-foot-tall grain bin. When the corn turns to quicksand, family, neighbors and first responders must put aside their differences to rescue Cody from drowning.



## IT'S SAFE TO SAY

A message from our leader

- Jody Wacowich, Executive Director of AgSafe Alberta

### January is a weird month.

It's an optimistic time, with a new year bringing resolutions and a sincere hope for life to be better and brighter.

But it's also a dark and slow month on the Canadian prairies – especially in the rural areas, on the often quieter farms so many of us call home. This year, the slow months will be even slower, as we find ourselves in the midst of another round of COVID-19 shutdowns that have impacted who we see and how we feel.

Farmers are always at higher risk for health and safety incidents but now we need to add mental health to this list too. So now, as we are all contemplating our plans for the year, I am urging our rural communities to make farmer health and farm safety a top priority this year, because despite what some of us believe, we are more at risk now than ever before.

Yes, in a longer-term scope, the amount of farm accidents and deaths are still significant. But the numbers are still significant enough to merit our attention and response. In 2019 there

were still 16 deaths in Alberta resulting from farm accidents -- which is 16 too many. Yes, our industry has become better at creating, regulating and enforcing better safety systems.

But the fact remains that we work in hazardous environments, with large-scale and complicated equipment, often by ourselves or with few others. We are often self-directed, meaning less stringent safety guidelines or structures in place. Our work days are long and we get tired, especially in busy seasons. We have so many stressors. And more importantly, safety is just not always our top priority.

Last year, a study published in the Journal of Agromedicine showed a decline in the quality of Canadian media coverage of farm accidents between 2010 and 2017, with less detail given about the accidents and, more importantly, how they could have been prevented.

Furthermore, in recent years farmers' mental health has really become a focus. We have learned that farmers suffer from higher levels of stress, anxiety, depression and emotional exhaustion than other industries. At the same time, there is a deep rooted resistance in our rural communities to talk about these issues. In fact, according to Do More Ag, 40% of Canadian farmers reported that they would resist seeking help for mental health issues because of public perception. These are alarming trends and ones that require our attention

At AgSafe Alberta, our mission is to support a culture of safety on farms and ranches in Alberta through information, education and training. This winter, we are rolling out several initiatives to help Alberta farmers keep safety top of mind this year. Earlier this month we launched a Take 11, a campaign to encourage farmers to take 11 seconds before starting a new task to note potential hazards and how they will control them. The FARMERS CARE acronym reflects the most dangerous situations on farms today.

We are also hosting a series of webinars in the coming months outlining everything farmers need to be mindful of these days as we head into another growing season, including current OHS regulations, COVID considerations and how to design a safety plan customized for your farm.

Finally, we have a suite of resources available on our website and one of our farm safety advisors is always available to help you with your farm safety questions and concerns.

We urge you to join us in making 2021 a

safe year for all farms across Alberta.

**Jody Wacowich**  
**AgSafe Executive Director**



## SAFETY MINUTE

Falls inside or outside of a grain bin or storage structure can occur when workers and family members are accessing ladders, catwalks, or other elevated walking surfaces and bin roof entrances. There are a lot of older grain bins that continue to be used because they are structurally sound; however it is very likely they are not built to the standards of today's bins, for example:

- Ladder rungs may be too close to the bin wall and not provide enough toe clearance
- There may not be a roof ladder to reach the bin lid or a platform at the top which would make the transition to the roof and move to the access lid safer
- There may not be anchor points for tie off when using fall protective equipment
- The ladder duty rating/weight allowance may not be sufficient or the ladder may not have a fall-prevention cage installed



- Rust, missing or loose bolts, and damage incurred over the years can weaken or unsecured ladders

Ensure that you always use three points of contact while ascending and descending ladders. Always pre-inspect any ladder before climbing it. Consider the weather conditions when doing so, as rain, frost, and dew can cause the ladder and elevated walking surfaces to become slippery. When climbing ladders, wear gloves that allow for good dexterity and grip, likewise, ensure your footwear has good rubber, slip-resistant soles that are free from mud or snow. Do not climb a ladder if you are injured, have severe arthritis which limits your ability to climb and/or grip, or suffer from any medical conditions which could cause you to become dizzy or faint. If you have concerns about unauthorized access, consider installing a ladder guard to prevent children and others from climbing them.

Wherever possible, eliminate the need to climb a bin. You can do this by installing:

- Automatic grain bin lid opener
- High-level detectors such as a rotary or diaphragm switch to indicate when the bin is full
- Remote grain monitors to check the temperature, moisture, and CO2 levels in the bins



WCB Alberta statistics show that over 20% of lost-time claims are the result of fall. Don't underestimate the likelihood or severity of a fall, especially from a grain bin, as they can not only be serious but potentially have fatal consequences.



## TAKE 11

*'Take 11' and reacquaint yourself with the fundamentals of farm safety!*

*Introducing FARMERS CARE - life saving opportunities for agriculture. What are your risk zones on the farm? How can you prevent an incident from happening?*

This month, Take 11 seconds to refresh your knowledge of the risks and hazards of falls from heights.

**Take11.ca**



# SAFETY FIRST, LAST THOUGHTS

Every year we hear about someone that falls from a bin, a ladder or a roof that gets injured.

Unfortunately, falls usually result in serious injuries and the affected worker can end up in the hospital for days or suffer from long-term injuries into the future. Fall management programs help to provide workers with awareness regarding how the job can be performed safely at heights.

## STEPS FOR FALL MANAGEMENT

### Identify job tasks to be performed at heights

Evaluate areas around the farm where jobs performed could cause a farmworker to fall greater than 10 feet (3 meters) or falls under this height that presents an unusual risk for injury (such as falling onto something). Examples might include changing lights in the barn, working from ladders, working around openings in the floor of the barn, changing roofing materials, performing maintenance on equipment mounted on the sides and tops of facilities. Think about job tasks that will require the worker to work at heights for an extended period of time. List the job tasks in a table and identify the potential hazards and concerns that may be associated with the job to be worked on. By listing the jobs and hazards, you will have a document that the farm can refer to overtime

### Design a plan for performing the work at heights in a safe manner.

There are six key elements for the farm fall protection plan.

1. Identify all the hazards for the job.
2. What type of fall protection will be required?
3. Where will the fall protection equipment be anchored?
4. How will the full protective equipment be assembled, disassembled, inspected, and maintained?



5. If the farmworker falls, identify how they will be protected from hitting structures or the ground below?

6. If a worker falls, how will they be rescued? Document the plan on a form that is prepared before the job is started.

## Training

Train all farmworkers that perform work at heights. When evaluating work at heights also identify the farmworkers that will be expected to perform those job tasks. Farmworkers that perform work at heights will need to have specialized training that includes procedures to assemble, maintain, inspect, use, and disassemble the fall protection system or systems in use. Any of the farmworkers that will be expected to rescue another worker who has fallen must be trained in rescue procedures

Your fall protection program will help to raise awareness about your safety concerns for all work performed at heights. You have the power to customize your program to meet the specific needs of your farm operation. Grow your program as your operation changes and consider improvements for training, equipment, and facilities that enhance your pathway to a safe work plan.

### Find out more here:

<https://www.agsafeab.ca/Media/agsafe-ab-working-at-heights-on-the-farm-gfii-v17->



### Watch our "Fall From Heights Video":

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQ\\_Cvw1hoUc&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EQ_Cvw1hoUc&feature=youtu.be)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*It's a great time to develop your farm safety plan!*



## It's a great time to develop your farm safety plan!

**We are here to help** – Pull up a comfortable chair, pour a cup of coffee and join us for a three part webinar series.

**Feb 9** at 12pm - Safety is Everyone's Responsibility with *Alan D. Quilley*

**Mar 9** at 1pm - Being right or being regulated with *Reg Steward*

**Register for free at [agsafeab.ca](https://agsafeab.ca)**



## Getting Started

Not sure where to get started? Join the AgSafe Alberta team on January 26 at 7pm, February 23 at 12 pm, or March 23 at 7 pm for a one-of-a kind webinar on how to build your safety plan.

**Register for free at [agsafeab.ca](https://agsafeab.ca)**

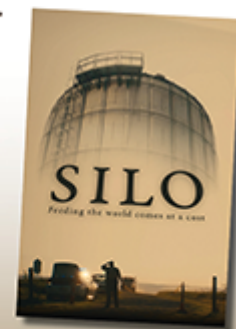


## Join us January 19th

AgSafe Alberta is hosting a special virtual event for **SILO**, the first ever feature film about a grain entrapment. We're excited to bring you the opportunity to view this film from the comfort of your home!

Along with showing the feature film, we will be having a discussion about farm safety, grain handling, and other themes in the film with panelists Colin Millang and Tom Littlechild.

***This is going to be a one-of-kind event you won't want to miss.***



**Click here to RSVP today at [eventribe.com](https://eventribe.com)**



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