



September 2019

## First Aid Essentials: Ready or Not?



Whether it's a medical emergency, workplace injury or exposure issue, having the right first aid training, knowledge and supplies can improve outcomes and even save lives.

"First aid requirements at work sites are based on three factors: how hazardous the work is, how far you are from a health care facility, and how many people are working," said Laura Bezemer, safety manager for AgSafe Alberta. "Those requirements also vary depending on the hazard level of the work involved, and farming is generally considered a high hazard environment."

First aid training can take one of two forms. Emergency first aid is a one-day course that provides intervention training for life-threatening emergencies. For most farming worksites, standard first aid – a two-day course – is the norm, especially in remote areas. In addition to all topics covered by emergency first aid training, standard first aid addresses other injuries like fractures and covers treatment for adults, children and infants. Certification for standard first aid is good for three years and can be renewed with a one-day course if completed before the initial certification expires.

Government certified first aid training is offered by a number of agencies across the province (<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/ohs-approved-first-aid-training-courses.pdf>). Training methods range from all day training in class to a blended approach that combines online theory with classroom instruction on skills like CPR.

Selecting a first aid kit is important, so make sure it suits your operational needs. Also, make sure that they are readily available on your farm, including when you are working away from the farm site.

There is funding for first aid training and first aid kits through the Alberta Farm and Safety Producer Grant Program (<https://www.alberta.ca/farm-health-and-safety-producer-grant-program.aspx>), and producers can also obtain funding to hold a local first aid course (<http://albertaagsocieties.ca/farm-safety-grant/>).

Ultimately, effective first aid comes down to ensuring that you are ready to respond when incidents occur. "You need to know what

you're doing beforehand, because once something happens, time is of the essence," said Bezemer. "Especially with a critical injury in a remote area where maybe you can't get assistance right away, you must be able to stabilize that person until help arrives. Also, keep in mind that even if there is a hospital close to the farm gate, incidents can occur in the field a long way from there. Considering factors like that, and having the proper first aid training and equipment in place, is all part of emergency response planning."

For more information regarding first aid, covering aspects like training standards, emergency transportation and reporting/recording of injuries: <http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/OHS/OHSCode.pdf>

READ FULL ARTICLE



## NEW AGSAFE ALBERTA SAFETY MANAGER

Hi! My name is Laura Bezemer and I am the new Safety Manager here at AgSafe Alberta. I am passionate about policy and keeping people safe in the workplace. My love for health and safety started as early as elementary as a school patrol captain and my desire to pursue a career in this field was cemented while completing an internship for a health and safety industry during university.

Prior to starting at AgSafe, I have held several roles in healthcare, engineering, and construction designing, implementing, and managing health and safety systems. I am a Canadian Registered Safety Professional and completed a Master of Public Policy from Simon Fraser University where my research focused on reducing injuries among home care workers.

Despite being a city girl, agriculture is near and dear to my heart. Growing up I was heavily involved in the local equestrian community and my husband's family owns a cattle farm in Manitoba. Outside of work, I enjoy volunteering at Spruce Meadows, sitting on several community boards, trying, but miserably failing at some athletic endeavors and spending time with my husband, young son, and crazy terrier.

I am excited to be able to serve in the role of Safety Manager for AgSafe and support Alberta producers. I am available if you have any questions or would just like to say hi at [lbezemer@agsafeab.ca](mailto:lbezemer@agsafeab.ca) or 403-219-6269.

## Grain Bin Safety: Where Education Meets Preparation

It's a sobering truth that tragedy is often the best teacher. That's the case with grain bin safety, as recent on-farm fatalities involving children have raised awareness of the dangers. As with many hazards, preventing grain bin incidents is a matter of education and preparation.

"Entrapment and engulfment are very real dangers that can happen anywhere grain is stored," said Robert Gobeil, agricultural health and safety specialist for the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association. "Our BeGrainSafe Program is an effort to arm producers, their workers and their families with the knowledge they need to stay safe around grain."

Being "grain safe" starts with understanding how it behaves in storage. If grain is in poor condition, it tends to crust up on surfaces

or scale up on the side of bin walls. When the farmer enters the bin to free up a jammed auger or sweep, there could be a void under the surface, or someone may forget to turn the equipment off. Once the grain begins to flow again, it behaves like quicksand, causing people to sink out of sight in 10-15 seconds and suffocate. This means that workers have only a few seconds to react when a problem occurs, making proper preparation essential:

- Keep grain in good condition to avoid the necessity of entering the bin. Monitor grain regularly and use your aeration equipment as needed to help regulate humidity and temperature, thereby preventing grain from degrading.
- Never work alone. If you must enter the bin to clear up a jam, always have a bystander who is trained in emergency procedures and knows how to quickly stop the flow of material.
- Prior to harvest, perform general maintenance and inspection of the grain bin itself. Ensure that augers and sweeps are working properly, and that guards are in place. Part of maintenance is removing guards to lubricate bearings, but replacing them afterwards is critical. If someone becomes engulfed in the bin, an unguarded auger under the surface can make a bad situation even worse by triggering entanglement.
- Know the direct number to your local fire department, as it is not always 911 in rural areas.
- Use fall protection equipment when entering the bin. Do you have an anchor point near the top of the bin that will support someone if they become entrapped, preventing them from sinking out of sight?

“Many grain bins today cannot support an anchor point because of their design, or were simply manufactured without them, and this is where industry needs to make a change,” said Gobeil.

- Keep children of any age away from grain when it is being stored or handled.

Another component of grain bin safety is recognizing how the industry has changed and the hazards that can result.

“At almost every trade show where we talk about grain safety, someone tells me that they used to play with grain all the time growing up and never had an issue,” said Gobeil. “In all likelihood, those were much smaller bins, as the size has gone up exponentially and created a greater threat due to sheer volume.”

Tragedy may be an effective teacher, but if you can learn to prevent it in the first place, so much the better.

# Compared to a load of grain you are only a few bushels.



A 10-inch auger  
moves 85 cubic  
feet of grain in  
1 minute, that  
equals 18 people.



On average 1 person = 4.7 cubic feet



## AgSafe Alberta Society OUT AND ABOUT

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

**October 5:** Rocky Ag Society Breakfast

**October 23:** Swine Tech Workshop, Red Deer

**Nov 4-6:** Alberta Bee Keepers AGM, Edmonton

**Nov 20-21:** Alberta Potato AGM, Edmonton



VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR EVENT DETAILS

If you would like AgSafe Alberta Society to attend or present at one of your agricultural events in Alberta please email: [info@agsafeab.ca](mailto:info@agsafeab.ca) with details.

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## YOUR SAFETY YOUR WAY

AgSafe 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 AgSafe 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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