

Ag Radio programs for September 16 - 22, 2013

Farm Safety and Health Week - vehicle safety

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. This is national farm safety and health week. So yep, all week you're going to hear me harping on safety and health topics. But just because you may not live or work on a farm, don't tune me out yet. You see, if you drive on the roads of this area, you will encounter farm implements. I know what it's like out there on the road. You leave home for work or where ever with no extra time figured into the occasion. As an old high school buddy of mine said, I leave just in time with no extra time allowed. If a squirrel runs out in front of me, I don't have time to step on the brakes for it! So here's the rub. If you get caught behind a tractor or other slow moving vehicle the law does say that if more than three vehicles stack up behind it, it does have to stop and pull over to let them around, WHEN IT IS SAFE TO DO SO. If you're the only one behind that combine OR there is no place to pull over to let traffic around, you can get all bent out of shape, but you aren't going to change a thing! That farm equipment does not accelerate, brake or maneuver like your car or pickup truck does. It is designed for other things, so be patient. Ultimately, that's what it is all about: patience. We need look out for the other vehicles out there, including bicycles, motorcycles as well as farm equipment. We leave just a little bit earlier so that we do have time to brake for that squirrel. We have fall harvest gearing up and wheat planting time so there will be more farm equipment and grain trucks out there, so slow down and be patient! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Farm Safety and Health Week - Look out for everyone!

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Agricultural production is different. In most industries where we are working around the size of equipment that we use in agriculture, there'd be a designated safety officer. In many farming/ranching operations it's one or two people and that's it. So you may wind up being HR and safety officer, manager, chief laborer. and everything else! Sadly, and I've been on both ends of this before, safety sometimes takes a back seat. We forget that virtually everything we work with on the farm is bigger or faster than we are. A PTO shaft is spinning at 540 RPMs, or faster. That's 9 revolutions per second and you can be wrapped up in that before you even think. Familiarity breeds complacency. You've done something a thousand times and it becomes second nature and then you aren't even thinking. I can't even begin to count the number of times that I've driven around the block just because I couldn't remember pushing the button to close the garage door. What was I thinking about? Certainly not the garage door! We HAVE to look out for ourselves and each other because nobody else is going to. It doesn't matter whether it's a four-wheel drive tractor, or a push lawnmower, whether it's an Angus bull or a bucket calf, they are all very valuable to your operation and they can all maim or kill you. You have to remember how valuable you are to your operation and your family as well. Never put safety in second place, because that's when things will come back to bite you. Just a moment's hesitation or a thought of, I've done this a hundred times before, can be a mistake that you can't make! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC,

1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Farm Safety and Health Week - Your Health is important

This is Ag Outlook on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. It's a well known fact that we men are genetically pre-disposed to not go to the doctor and to not follow doctor's orders. We will give as many reasons as there are days of the year why we won't go to the doctor. Farmers and ranchers are exposed to many health threats throughout their lives. Even proper use of pesticides can still put us at risk to long term health issues. We all know that many jobs in agriculture are dirty, dusty jobs. Most of the time we are in them working without masks, filters or respirators. I've had grain dust pneumonia and it isn't fun. Fingers and other extremities get mangled and abused and as I heard one person say, tape an aspirin to it and go on! I've had non-farmer types question me about why farmers and ranchers, or for that matter most men, are so reluctant to go to the doctor. I know what it's like to have a close call. I barely dodged a heart attack myself. But here's what I think is going on. For many men, heck for many people, they have more fear of not dying, than of dying. As one farmer bluntly told me once, half jokingly, half serious, I'm working up to the big one. The fear of not being able to continue working as they always have, is far scarier than dying. And you either understand that or you don't. Now, for all of you that feel that way, quit being so selfish. Take the time to see your doctor regularly. I know what you say, but I also know how many people asked me how I knew that I had a heart problem. Your health is too big to take care of yourself so get the professionals involved. Then take care of yourself for family and friends, because we all care! This has been Ag Outlook on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm

Chuck Otte.