Operation of Self-Propelled Equipment on Public Roadways Meeting Kit



SAFE USE OF TRACTORS AND SELF-PROPELLED FARM EQUIPMENT

Knowing how to use and operate all controls on each piece of machinery is the first step towards hazard free operation. Keep the machines in proper working condition.

SPECIFIC TRAFFIC DANGERS

Typical circumstances of collisions with farm equipment include:

(1) **left turn collisions**, which most commonly happen when motorists try to pass a farm vehicle as it makes a left turn; (2) **rear-end collisions** frequently occur when motorists misjudge the speed of a slow-moving farm vehicle and do not have time to react and slow down; and (3) **passing collisions,** which happen when motorists attempt to pass a farm vehicle without realizing the width and length of the equipment until they are in the passing lane.

Before moving a tractor, the operator should make sure that:

- all shields and guards are in place and operational.
- wheel treads are set as wide apart as practical for the job.
- there is clear visibility on all sides.
- there is nothing in the tractor’s intended path.
- there are no hazards or obstructions such as overhead wires.
- the brakes work properly.
- brake pedals are locked together before traveling on a road, where applicable.

The operator should not run a tractor indoors for extended periods of time as toxic gases can build up. Exhaust gases contain carbon monoxide, which is odourless, colourless and deadly.

STANDARD OPERATING PRACTICES FOR OPERATING SELF-PROPELLED EQUIPMENT

Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) Emblem. This triangular, bright-orange sign with a red border must be securely mounted at the centre or to the left of centre of all slow-moving farm vehicles and equipment. Be sure it is clean and visible.

Do a pre-operational inspection before you begin to operate the equipment. Check to ensure brakes, tires and lights are in good mechanical condition. Clean windows, mirrors, lights and markers.

Secure towed loads.

Only trained and licensed drivers who know the machine's operations and rules of the road are allowed to operate machinery.

Drive as far to the right as possible, but stay on the road. Don't drive on the shoulder as it could be soft or have potholes and motorists may try to pass when it is unsafe.

Clearly indicate all turns. Often times, motorists following farm equipment think the operator is pulling over to allow him to pass, when the operator is actually making a wide left turn. If your equipment does not allow other drivers to see your signals, an escort vehicle(s) should be used.

Slow down when leaving a roadway. Tractors have a high centre of gravity. Decreasing a tractor's speed by half cuts its centrifugal force by a factor of four, reducing the risk of rollover.

Use extra caution when transporting dangerous goods, such as anhydrous ammonia, pesticides, compressed gas or fuel.

Tractors have rollover protective structures (ROPS) and a seat belt. Wearing a seatbelt in a ROPS-equipped tractor keeps the operator protected and in the safe zone. Otherwise, they will likely be killed when thrown from the seat and crushed by the tractor.

DO NOT allow extra riders. On all tractors and other farm equipment.

Be aware of weather and road conditions. Check your local weather forecast before leaving.

If you are impaired by alcohol or drugs or too tired, don't operate farm vehicles and equipment.

FINAL WORD

The large size and slow speed of farm machinery and other large slow moving machinery can be hazardous when driving on public roads. Traffic may be impatient to pass or travelling too fast to brake in time to avoid a collision.