

WHEEL & TRACK-TYPE TRACTOR SAFETY

Tractors are invaluable farm and ranch tools, but they are also a major source of farm injuries. In practically every instance, the accidents are the result of failure to follow appropriate operating rules and manufacturer guidelines. The following suggestions can apply to every agricultural operation involving tractors:



- Inspect brakes, steering, tires, and lights daily and repair as needed.
- Shut off engine before fueling the tractor, regardless of fuel being used.
- Shut down engine and set brakes when making any adjustments, when hitching tools or when tractor is left unattended.
- Avoid tight radius turns that could permit implements to “climb up” the tires. Apply brakes slowly to avoid overturns.
- Always use hitch provided; never hitch to axle housing. Hitch low to reduce possibility of overturns.
- Start slowly to avoid overturns. Operate at moderate speeds, when in doubt, slow down.
- Use extra care when turning on a slope, side hill, or rough, uneven ground. Tractors have a high center of gravity and overturn easily. Since wheel tractors are light on the front end, it is best to go up a steep hill backward to prevent a rear overturn.
- Slow down before turning. This is particularly true at turn rows close to an irrigation ditch.
- Tractors should be provided with factory-developed rollover guards and seat belts.
- Always be seated when operating a tractor. Never stand.
- Never permit riders on either the tractor or towed equipment unless it is designed for passengers.
- Never mount or dismount a tractor while it is in motion.
- Devise safety procedures that everyone on your farm must follow, such as only starting the tractor when sitting in the driver’s seat and turning the tractor engine off before leaving the driver’s seat.
- Install ROPS and seatbelts on all tractors.
- If using a front-end loader, install FOPS.
- Don’t allow anyone to stand near the tractor when it’s being started.
- Don’t operate your tractor close to dams, pipes, drains or powerlines, on steep slopes or near other potential hazards.
- Remember that tractors have a high center of gravity and are more likely to tip when riding over hilly ground.
- Don’t carry passengers.
- Make sure that steps and control pedals are non-slip and kept clean