

Network News

THE NETWORK | providing agricultural occupational health and safety information and programs to Saskatchewan farm families since 1988

The Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture presents The Farm Safety Walkabout



The Australian expression “Walkabout” is a term for a walk or hike, or trip to discover what is there. The Farm Safety Walkabout is a valuable tool for farm families to use to prevent injuries. However, it’s not just for kids! It is a wonderful tool to remind us that injuries are predictable therefore preventable. You will find a copy to pull out of the centre of this newsletter to use with your children, new workers, young workers and visitors. It is also a great addition to your Farm Safety Plan.

New workers include anyone who hasn’t worked with you before regardless of their actual age. Older farmers can be new to your farm and need to know where items such as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) like earplugs and respirators are located. First aid kits and fire extinguishers should also be accessible as well as their location known.

Remember being a teen-ager and wanting to show off how much you knew? Young workers sometimes think that they know everything and don’t tell you that they haven’t been trained for a particular task because they want to impress you. The Walkabout can provide opportunity for necessary discussion in a non-confrontational setting.

Do you frequently have visitors on your farm? Visitors on your farm can benefit from the Walkabout as an introductory activity and allow opportunity to ask questions and for you to be able to give them the safety rules that you live by.

And when you are walking about, consider the state of your work boots. See page three for a proper work boot fit.

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Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:
Box 120 RUH, 103 Hospital Drive, Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W8

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NETWORK ACTIVITIES

Letter from the Editor:

Network workshops and RM visits in July 2011 took me to the land of beautiful canola on the Melfort, Tisdale, Nipawin and Whitefox trail. The beauty of the countryside was rivaled only by my experience with the friendly residents in the various local communities that I visited. Every year this province amazes and excites me as I marvel at the extraordinary things that I see, and I often wonder why anyone would ever want to live anywhere other than Saskatchewan!

The Melfort museum hosts a weekly event throughout the summer bringing the community out for socializing, burgers and horseshoes. The museum features a pioneer village and an extensive collection of vintage farm machinery used in the development of the agricultural industry and the settling of the area.

Technology and engineering of farm equipment has advanced from early thrashing machines that required a crew of 20 to keep up to it. Replaced by a combine and one operator, our safety issues have changed drastically to issues surrounding communication and working alone. Hay stooking has changed to potentially dangerous large round baling equipment. This huge advancement in agriculture eliminates some hazards while creating others that need to be addressed. Prairie Agriculture and Machinery Institute (PAMI) engineers develop safety features for existing machinery. You can access their On-Guard handbook for home build guarding of farm equipment on their website www.pami.ca

Our ancestors who used that vintage farm machinery would be proud of the current farming generations and the amazing farm implements of the present. They would also be proud of the steps we take to keep future generations safe including the engineered safety technology to new equipment and the upgrades developed for older equipment such as Role Over Protection Structures (ROPS).

I am looking forward to presenting workshops for farm and ranch women as well as the Farm Safety Plan workshops this winter.

For those of you that have had a trying spring and summer season, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Bonita

EVENTS

Farm Safety Plan Workshop Update

GROWINGforward



with a
Farm Safety Plan



Thank you to everyone who attended a Farm Safety Plan workshop last winter and returned their Farm Safety Plan implementation questionnaire in the mail. Jerry Springer of the RM of Gull Lake was the lucky winner of the laptop that was sponsored by Affinity Credit Union. Congratulations Jerry!

Bunge hosted two Farm Safety Plan workshops at their plant near Nipawin during their customer appreciation day. Bunge is committed to safe work practices for their customers and employees.

There is still time to schedule a Farm Safety Plan workshop in your community this winter. Please contact the Network office if you would like to do so (306) 966-6644.

OTHER NETWORK NEWS:



Welcome to our Newest Network Staff Member: Tammy Gebhardt

Greetings!

I grew up on a small grain farm near Aberdeen which will be celebrating its centennial next year. As part of a farm family I learned farming skills from gardening, yard care, running machinery to running a seed cleaning plant in the 80's. My father's passion for the farm has included vintage machinery, collecting and running them in threshing demonstrations. Yes, I can stook!

This background gives me a unique appreciation for vintage machinery, however, I also like the parts and molding them together into artistic sculptures using blacksmithing techniques.

A partnership between the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture and the College of Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan brought me to the Network upon completion of my Masters degree in Nursing. This current opportunity is allowing me to bridge my professional background with my roots. I look forward to working with all those that are able to come out to a clinic in the next year!

Tammy



Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture (CCHSA)

The Agricultural Health and Safety Network was founded in 1988 out of the need to distribute current research findings to Saskatchewan farm families. The success of the Network is linked to the strength of CCHSA's research and its connection with Saskatchewan Rural Municipalities.

CCHSA is proud to announce that two researchers that focus their talents on areas significant to farm families have received extraordinary awards.

Distinguished Researcher Award 2011 • Dr. John Gordon

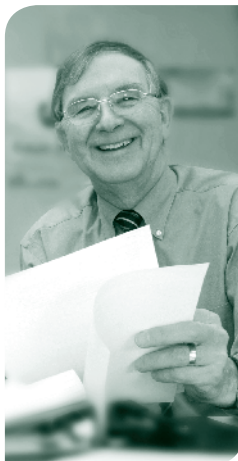
John Gordon, Director of the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture and a professor in the Department of Medicine, is the 2011 recipient of the Distinguished Researcher Award which recognizes a faculty member's contribution to scholarship through the creation, expansion, and critique of knowledge.



Dr. Gordon is an expert in the field of immune regulation and airway disease. He is internationally recognized as a major force in immunology and has conducted groundbreaking research working in the area of inflammatory diseases such as asthma.

Order of Canada • Dr. James Dosman

James Dosman has been named an officer of the Order of Canada. He is a distinguished research chair in agricultural medicine at the University of Saskatchewan and he and his colleagues are credited with establishing the Agricultural Health and Safety Network in Saskatchewan, a "farm safety and rural health municipal-based grassroots knowledge translation organization." Recognized as the father of agricultural medicine in Canada, he conducted pioneering research in a field that examines the health risks associated with agriculture.



WORK BOOTS

On a recent trip to Work Authority for new work boots for my son, I discovered that it really is almost impossible to simply pick up a pair of work boots for someone else. I experienced a new education while I talked to the manager, Mr. Brooke Smith-Windsor about the proper fitting of work boots. He later provided me with the following information on work boots to get the best and most comfortable fit. If your feet hurt, your day will seem twice as long and the discomfort may distract you from doing your job as safely as possible.

Safety-toe Work Boots – Protect your feet!

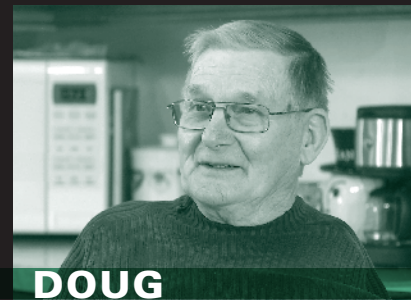
Safety-toe work boots are available in a wide variety of styles, designed with different purposes in mind. Whether for heavy construction or for hiking, a well fit safety boot or shoe will not only protect your foot but will support them and keep your feet comfortable. The best way to ensure fit is to try them on.

1. Wear your usual socks when shopping because even a small difference in the weight of your socks will make a difference.
2. Try on different brands because sizing between brands may vary. Match the arch length of your foot to the arch length of the footwear to provide you with the most support. The size that feels best is the size you should wear in that particular boot or shoe.
3. Never let your toes touch the end of the boot. If they do, you will feel it with each and every step you take. Check the toe room by pushing your foot ahead in the shoe and inserting an index finger behind your foot.
4. The outside of the big toe and little toe must not rub on the safety toe. Again, as above, you will feel them rub with every step.
5. Make sure your boots have a wide range of comfortable motion. Try bending and squatting during your fitting to ensure comfort.
6. Your heels should be held comfortably and should not rub harshly against the material lining the boot.
7. First impressions are important with boots/shoes. Your new footwear should feel like you've had them for a while.
8. No matter how much you like the appearance of the boot/shoe, some just won't work for you. Leave them in the store.
9. Try your new boot/shoe around the house or on a clean surface for an hour. 15 minutes in the store is not like 15 hrs on the job. If you notice something that is just not right, and the boots are clean and the retailer can re-sell them, you will find many will be happy to find you another boot/shoe that will work.

By Brooke Smith-Windsor, Manager, Work Authority, Saskatoon



To mark the 25th Anniversary of the Farmers with Disabilities program, a documentary telling stories of four of our volunteer farmers was created.

**DARWIN****BOB****MURRAY****DOUG**

FARMERS WITH DISABILITIES

Launches **New DVD**

The documentary chronicles the lives of each farmer, and details both their life changing incident and their recovery. The DVD demonstrates the challenges faced by the four producers and their families as they continue their lives as a farmer with a disability.

Each of the farmers featured is a valuable member of the volunteer community that is the backbone of the Farmers with Disabilities program. The DVD was developed to record their efforts and to provide a valuable new resource for the program.

The documentary is well suited for a variety of audiences including stories that lend themselves to the education of young students and other stories that are suitable for a more mature audience.

If you would like a complimentary copy of the DVD please contact the program coordinator below:

Bill Thibodeau
(306) 374-4448
bthibodeau@abilitiescouncil.sk.ca

The Farm Safety Walkabout Booklet

The booklet that is attached to the centre of this newsletter is a valuable tool for your Farm Safety Plan. We would love to hear about your experience with this resource. Please tell us your story. Email your Farm Safety Walkabout story to: aghealthandsafety@usask.ca



DETECTING SKIN CANCER, EASY AS ABC

Dr. Angela Law, Dermatology Resident

As the SUNSMART campaign in Australia rightfully promotes 'protect your farm's most important asset-you!' we would like you to be empowered to take control of your own skin health. If you're a farmer or work outdoors, you have a higher than average risk for developing various forms of skin cancer, some of which can be deadly. It is just as important to practice sun protection as it is to practice skin cancer screening. Early detection of melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, can save your life!

We know that men are more likely to die from melanoma mainly because of later detection. Malignant melanoma is more common on the backs of men and the legs and arms of women. In farmers, melanomas may develop more on the head and neck region secondary to chronic UV exposure in this area.

Monthly skin examinations can be done easily. Pick the same time each month and get your partner involved. Begin by learning about the different birthmarks or moles you have and know how they look and feel. Taking photographs will help you monitor changes in moles. Some tips for an effective skin examination:

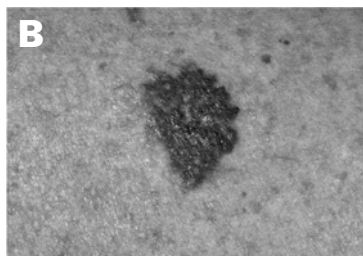
- the best time to perform a skin exam is after bathing
- use a full length mirror or a hand held mirror
- check yourself from head to toe including: scalp, genitals, mouth, fingernails, palms, soles
- check for anything new: a new mole that looks different, a new dark or colored area that may be raised, change in a pre-existing mole, a sore that doesn't heal
- get your hairdresser to examine your scalp thoroughly

If you notice anything new or changing, please see your primary care physician or a dermatologist as soon as possible.

Asymmetry- take a ruler and split the mole in half; one half does not match the other half



Border Irregularity- the edges of the mole are ragged, blurred or notched

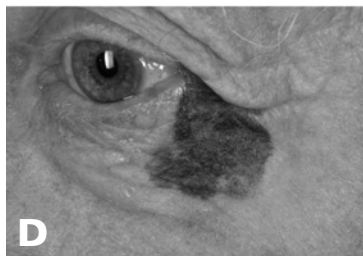


Color- the color is not uniform throughout the mole; there may be different shades of tan, brown, black and even red, blue and white.

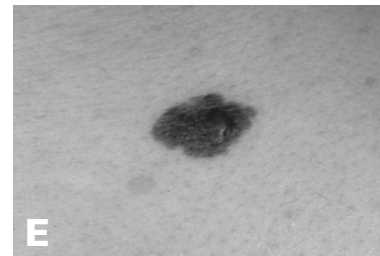


Follow the simple ABCs of melanoma warning signs when examining your moles:

It is never too late to start protecting your skin and reduce your risk of developing skin cancer in the future.



Diameter- melanomas are usually greater than ¼ inch (6mm) but they can be smaller



Evolving/elevation - be suspicious of a mole that is new or changing rapidly

25th
ANNIVERSARY

THE CANADIAN CENTRE FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY IN AGRICULTURE

Develops a Respiratory Safety DVD

CCHSA recognized long ago that respiratory hazards on the farm are a major concern for the agricultural industry. This year, celebrating 25 years of excellent research, CCHSA continues to focus on farming related health issues including respiratory disease, chemical and environmental exposure in the workplace, and subsequently leading Canada in terms of agricultural health and safety.

The Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture (CCHSA) will develop a respiratory health and safety DVD this winter with partial funding from the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA). This project will complement the Network's exceptional respiratory program by providing a standard resource. We are looking forward to launching this DVD during the 2012 winter.

What issues will be addressed?

- Respiratory hazards prevalent throughout farming operations
- Respiratory health and safety
- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Three major respiratory concerns: dust, gases and chemicals
- Long term effects of exposure on the health of farmers

RESPIRATORS

Offer Crucial Protection



For producers, the name of the debilitating medical condition that people can get from breathing in mouldy dust sounds downright ominous.

Farmer's Lung is an allergic respiratory disease marked by nagging coughs, shortness of breath and general feelings of malaise. Attacks can be acute and become chronic over time if exposure continues, requiring intensive medical care.

According to Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (www.ccohs.ca), the few studies carried out on the subject suggest that anywhere from two to 10 per cent of Canadian farm workers have the disease.

As many as 40 per cent (depending on the region) have been exposed to moulds, dust and other farm-common materials like organochlorines and carbamate pesticides that are believed to cause Farmer's Lung.

But Glen Blahey believes it doesn't have to be that way. A health and safety specialist with

the Winnipeg-based Canadian Agricultural Safety Association, he says there is a long list of airborne dangers that regularly lurk in barns, bins and tanks on farms across Canada.

But all of them, he says, can be countered by using common sense and the proper respiratory equipment for the job at hand.

In addition to saving lungs from dust-borne particles that can carry everything from bacteria, moulds and fungi to dried urine and feces from hantavirus-carrying mice and rats, Blahey says respirators can protect wearers from deadly gases in oxygen-deficient environments and from dangerous chemicals.

"Hydrogen sulphide is extremely toxic, even in low concentrations," says Blahey. "Two breaths and you're dead."

As a result, doing work in a liquid manure tank or in any other confined space like a manure storage pit or a silo where high-moisture hay is ensilaged – even in a

grain bin that's been fumigated for bugs – requires supplied oxygen like firefighters and scuba divers use.

For other dangers like fumes from galvanized metal in welding workshops and handling or spraying pesticides, Blahey says half or full-face chemical or canister respirators are essential.

"Respirator selection should always be predicated by the risk present," he adds.

In addition to buying respirators that fit snugly on the cleanshaven face of each individual user (no sharing of masks) Blahey cautions against buying lower-priced respirators that aren't certified by the Canadian Safety Association or another recognized North American standards agency.

"Trying to save a few bucks could be dangerous – even deadly," he says. "Erring on the side of caution is always best. The bottom line is that if there is no way to avoid the hazard, wear the proper protection."

BY MARK CARDWELL

Mark is a writer and freelance journalist who lives in the Quebec City region. He is a regular correspondent for a dozen newspapers, magazines, trade and specialty publications in Canada, the United States and Europe.

This article is reprinted by permission of the author and Farm Credit Canada. It was originally published in the September/October 2011 issue of FCC's magazine, AgriSuccess. For subscription information about AgriSuccess, see www.fcc-fac.ca.

 Farm Credit Canada 



FARM PROGRESS SHOW

Mohammad Haque promoting and distributing respiratory personal protective equipment (PPE) and administering a related survey at the Farm Progress Show in June.

Respiratory Safety on the Farm

*By Mohammad Haque,
School of Public Health Graduate Student*



Farmers are exposed to many hazards, and some of the most dangerous ones are not always apparent. Dust, gases, and chemical fumes present serious problems for a farmer's respiratory health. Many of these occur in enclosed spaces, as the hazards build up reaching dangerous levels having an effect in an instant or over a longer period of time.

The body does have defenses to protect a person from respiratory hazards. Nose hairs and mucus are able to trap larger particles, and remove these particles with a cough or sneeze. However smaller particles are able to get past, causing the airways to swell and make breathing difficult. Some conditions that a farmer may notice are shortness of breath, phlegm, coughing, or asthma.

In our respiratory system, our airways start at the mouth and nose moving down past the throat to the lungs. Here the air passage divides repeatedly, getting smaller and smaller to a point where gases are able to move into the blood stream. This happens in air sacs of the lungs.

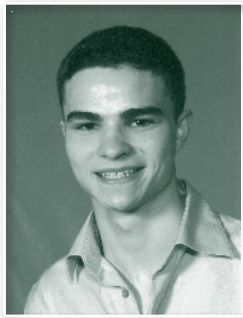
Using respirators helps protect from these respiratory conditions. Based on the nature of work and hazards, respirators can protect against all these problems or be completely

useless. Therefore it is important to discuss with product specialists at farm supply stores what hazards to beware in your work environment and what protection you will require.

When using a respirator, always take the time to check for its quality and fit, paying attention to seals and ease of breathing. If either of these are lacking, do not use that respirator. Get another appropriate respirator before proceeding with the task.

Taking preventative steps can also help reduce exposure to respiratory hazards. When buying new equipment or starting another season, consider items or practices that will minimize your contact with gases, dust, or chemicals, such as working in well-ventilated environments. If you are exposed, use the appropriate respirator for the hazard you are working with to limit any impact.

"Always take the time to check for its quality and fit, paying attention to seals and ease of breathing."



RM of Ituna Bon Accord No. 246 Student Awarded SARM Scholarship

This year's winner of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities 90th Anniversary \$1000 Student Scholarship in Agricultural Safety and Rural Health is Steven Tymiak from the RM of Ituna Bon Accord #246. Steven is planning to enter the college of Arts and Science at the University of Regina this fall and to eventually attend law school. Steven lives in the Kelliher area in the Hamlet of Jasmin.

Steven's essay stresses the value of safety training for young workers: *"When you teach your children about safety and watch out for their health you are setting guidelines and values for the rest of their lives. It's a busy world with everyone in too big of a hurry, and children need to learn to stop and think about the consequences of their actions. Farm safety training has far reaching effects that may not be noticeable now, but will pay off in the future."*

Scholarship

Have you completed the last two years of high school in Saskatchewan?

Are you . . .

- Enrolled in Grade 12 for the 2011-2012 school year?
- Planning on studying at a post secondary school in the fall of 2012?

Do you . . .

- Have a farming background?
- Have parents or guardians who pay taxes to a RM?
- Live in a rural area?

Yes! Great!

- Download an application form from <http://www.cchsa-ccssma.usask.ca/ahsn/scholarships.php> or get one from your RM office.
- Write a 1,000 word essay on *The Importance of Safety and Health on Our Farm or Safety and Health Hazards on Our Farm.*
- Send your application and essay to: Sueli de Freitas, Public Relations Coordinator, Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture, Box 120, Royal University Hospital, 103 Hospital Drive, Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W8

Deadline: Post marked no later than Friday, February 3, 2011

Farm Stress Line:

1-800-667-4442

Monday to Saturday 8 A.M. to 9 P.M.

The farm stress line is a confidential peer counseling service responding to the needs of farm families. When you call you will talk to people who understand farming—men and women who have experienced the pressures of farming today. They are there to help you explore options and connect you with programs and services so you are better able to address problems and make choices.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Our newest Network members:

RM of Star City #428
RM of Torch River #488
RM of Arborfield #45

There are currently 204 RM members in the Agricultural Health and Safety Network. If your RM is not a member, and you would like to find out more about becoming a member, please call (306) 966-6647.

Moved? Retired? Not Farming?

To remove your name from our mailing list call (306) 966-6644 or contact the editor.

Need more information?

There are a variety of resources available on line at:
aghealthandsafetynetwork.usask.ca

Thank You to the Following Organizations for Supporting the Network News:



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THANK YOU!

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From the Editors

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