

Network News

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



Announcing

**2013 is the Agricultural Health and Safety Network's
25th Anniversary Year!**

The Agricultural Health and Safety Network is gearing up for a 25th anniversary celebration year! The theme for the anniversary will be respiratory safety. The Network started out with a focus on respiratory health and safety and it is only fitting that we celebrate 25 years of caring for Saskatchewan farm families with a respiratory theme. Keep an eye open in 2013 for a special educational package in your mailbox.

On the back of this newsletter you will find a call for applications for the annual scholarship award. This year the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture has not only raised the value, but is offering additional scholarships for a total of three awards of \$1500 to be presented at the annual SARM convention in March, 2013. If you know farm children graduating from high school in 2013, this is a great opportunity for them to off-set the cost of their post-secondary education.

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

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NETWORK ACTIVITIES

The Agricultural Health and Safety Network Now on Facebook!

Social media is a way for people to connect and be heard, as well as a new way to learn. The Network will link you to educational safety resources that are relative to your farming operation. We look forward to getting feedback from you regarding safety content you would like to receive through Facebook.

To address the numerous requests that we receive to increase our electronic opportunities, we have included a Facebook page. It is our goal to provide Saskatchewan farm families with current health and safety information at their fingertips.

We will offer Saskatchewan farm families the opportunity to interact in groups of like-minded individuals. They will receive notice of current information and updates to enhance the farm safety education strategies they are already using in their farming operation.

Our resources are available on our website, and paper copies are available through our office.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/AgricultureHealthSafetyNetwork

Phone: (306) 966-6644, or 966-6647

Website: aghealthandsafetynetwork.usask.ca

Like us on Facebook!



Letter from the Editor

We live in exciting times at the Agricultural Health and Safety Network! In the New Year we will celebrate 25 years of providing health and safety resources and services to Saskatchewan farm families. This momentous occasion will include a year of celebrations in our work and in our communities. We will be giving away additional scholarships and having special activities for our members.

Many of the issues that farmers face are also faced by acreage dwellers, including safety around animals, water safety, and risks associated with dermatitis. Just because you may not classify yourself as a farmer, doesn't mean that you don't have some of the same safety hazards.

The Network is part of the ever changing electronic age. We have a presence on Facebook and an updated website. If you are interested in a particular group on our Facebook page, please don't hesitate to make a suggestion. We would love to hear from you.

We still want to see you face-to-face, so make a point of checking out our website, emailing, or calling us regarding available workshops and clinics. We would like to see you and your neighbors in your community.

Bonita

Saskatchewan Rural Health Study

The Saskatchewan Rural Health Study finished the baseline survey in April 2011. Participation in the study was very good. The study was conducted in 32 rural municipalities and 14 towns and villages in rural Saskatchewan. There were 8261 adults from 4624 households participating in the survey. Clinical measurements including blood pressure, lung function tests and allergy skin prick tests were also done on 1685 of those adults. In addition 2383 children from 39 rural schools participated in the baseline study. Clinical measurements including lung function tests and allergy skin prick tests were also done on 595 of those children. The first results of the study are just now being published. Results of the study will be provided to participants including individuals, schools and rural municipal councils as they become available. The follow-up study will be conducted beginning in 2014. For further information about the study you can contact Louise Hagel, project manager, at (306) 966-6648 or by email at louise.hagel@usask.ca.

**Saskatchewan
Rural Health Project
2010 - 2015**



306-966-6648

Upcoming Health Clinics for Network Members

By Kendra Ulmer

RESPIRATORY & HEARING HEALTH CLINICS OF FARMERS

Hearing Conservation Clinic

What animal found on the farm is loud enough to damage your hearing? Are people telling you that your TV is too loud? Are earmuffs more effective than earplugs? Do you know how to prevent noise-induced hearing loss? To offer answers to these questions and learn much more, make an appointment at an upcoming *Hearing Conservation Clinic for Farm Families in your area*. Check out our Network website @ aghealthandsafetynetwork.usask.ca under Upcoming Events to find a clinic near you. Simply phone the contact number and book an appointment. The clinics are open to all Network farm families.

The hearing clinic will include a visual inspection of the ear canal, ear drum and a hearing screening with a RN from the Agricultural Health and Safety Network. The nurse will explain the results of the test and answer any health related questions that you may have. In addition, participants will be shown how to properly use hearing protection and will receive information to take home. Referrals will be made when necessary. Hearing aids are not sold at the clinic.

The Agricultural Health and Safety Network clinics are being offered to RM ratepayers through their membership in the Network. Co-sponsorship is provided by the Canadian Center for Health and Safety in Agriculture and Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture. The Network is looking forward to hearing from you this winter/spring!

Respiratory Health Clinics

How is Hantavirus transmitted to humans? What causes occupational asthma? What type of respiratory should I be using on the farm? What can I do to protect my respiratory health while working on the farm? If these questions interest you perhaps you should attend a Network Respiratory Health Clinic this winter/spring.

The Respiratory Health Clinic for Farmers is an educational and respiratory screening service provided to rural residents in the Network RMs. A registered nurse will work with clinic participants to increase their awareness of health and safety risks associated with respiratory hazards on the farm, develop methods to reduce their exposure, and establish a lung function baseline to monitor the effects such hazards have on their respiratory health. The clinic will include: demonstration of respiratory personal protective equipment, respiratory health questionnaire, blood pressure and lung function screening (spirometry), counseling, and referrals when necessary.

Please check out clinic locations on the Network website, and phone the RM hosting the clinic contact number to book an appointment for a clinic in your area.

If you have any questions about the clinics or would like more information on Hearing Conservation for Farmers or Respiratory Health please contact Kendra Ulmer, RN at (306) 966-6643.



Farm safety adds value to your farm business

Agricultural producers who write and implement farm safety plans in their operations preserve worker health and safety and are actually more profitable. In fact, businesses with written health and safety policies outperform their peers by 25 per cent, says research by Regnan and Goldman Sachs JBWere.

The study also shows that 60 per cent of small and medium sized companies that have work disruptions that last nine or more days are unable to recover financially. This is significant, considering that 61 per cent of farms in Canada are owned and operated by one person, 27 per cent are partnerships, 10 per cent are family corporations, and only 2 per cent of farms are non-family corporations, as indicated by Statistics Canada.

To help producers better manage their business risks, the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) has developed the Canada FarmSafe Plan, a new farm management tool. A free download of the core Canada FarmSafe Plan is available at www.planfarmsafety.ca.

The Canada FarmSafe Plan supports the theme *Plan • Farm • Safety*, a three-year focus for the Canadian agricultural safety campaign. This year, emphasis is on "Safety" including assessment, improvement and further development of safety systems. Last year, the focus was on "Farm", and included implementation, documentation and training. In 2010, the campaign promoted "Plan" featuring safety walkabouts and planning for safety.

The year-long "Safety" campaign will be launched with Canadian Agricultural Safety Week (CASW), March 11 to 17. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and CASA deliver CASW in partnership with Farm Credit Canada (FCC) and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) through Growing Forward, a federal, provincial, territorial initiative.

"While it's not always possible for producers to have control over everything, they do have a great deal of control over risk management," explains Rémi Lemoine, FCC Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. "Preventing injuries, illnesses and losses will go a long way in increasing an operation's bottom line, and peace of mind."

The economic impacts of incidents on a farm are far-reaching and affect profitability and workloads long after the incident has happened. Direct impacts may include: loss of key staff, disruption to business activity, damage to product and/or equipment, and increased workers compensation liability. On-farm safety incidents can also include fines, penalties and legal liabilities. Indirect or 'hidden' costs include: increased absenteeism and staff turnover, decreased job satisfaction or morale, and a poor corporate image within the community and agri-business.

When producers can see the pay-off for farm safety in both their bank accounts and their workload, the message on how important safety risk management is to a successful business can really hit home.

For more information contact:

Diane Wreford, CASA Communications, Tel: (204) 275-8874
E-mail: dwreford@casa-acsa.ca

“Horses can strike and kick with any foot.”



Horses

The following information is from:
A Health and Safety Guide for Handling Farm Animals and Poultry
Farm and Ranch Safety and Health Association (FARSHA)
<http://www.farsha.bc.ca/>

Tips About Behaviour

Horses can vary greatly in attitude, compliance, personality, temperament, and training. The breed of the horse may also influence the horse's behavior. Hot bloods, so named because they originated in locations with hot climates (Arabians and racehorse breeds) tend to be "high strung." Warm bloods (quarter horses, pleasure horses, Morgans, and Appaloosas) are calmer by nature, and cold bloods (Clydesdales, Percherons, and other heavy horses) are usually the calmest.

Horses rely on a very good sense of smell to recognize the familiar, and to react to new situations. Usually, horses are curious about new scents, but they may also react with alarm or fear to some scents. Horses also have extremely good hearing. A horse's ears are always in motion, as it tracks the sounds around it.

Horses do not have very good vision, even in daylight. In dim light, they see very poorly, and as a result they can be much more easily startled.

With one eye on each side of the head, most horses can easily see the wide sweep of their surroundings, but they cannot use both eyes to focus clearly on a distant point without swinging their head to face that direction.

Horses cannot clearly see nearby objects above their eye level, and may swing their head up, trying to focus their vision.

They have blind spots directly in front and behind, and have poor depth perception. Horses can be excitable; they may be startled by unusual or new sights, or even by familiar situations if taken by surprise by them.

Horses show their distress or displeasure in a variety of ways including tail-swishing, raised head, and pinned-back ears.

The following are a few horse handling procedures:

Good Practices Around Horses

According to the statistical information provided by the Canadian Agricultural Injury Surveillance Program, there were 29 horse-related deaths on farms in Canada between 1990 and 2000. In ten of these deaths, a rider was thrown. Eight of the deaths were caused by a kick (sometimes to a handler, and sometimes to someone simply standing too near the horse), and another six involved being struck by a horse either outdoors or in a stall.

Begin by checking that all your tack is in good repair. Wear appropriate clothing and

protective equipment. Always use appropriate riding boots – high in the heel and with smooth soles. Consider using bell stirrups, which are less likely to catch your foot if you're thrown or the horse falls.

Approach the horse quietly and with confidence, from the left or "on side" of the horse. Many horses have been trained to be approached and mounted from either side, but all are trained to accept a rider from the "on side."

Never approach a horse in a group with treats or buckets of feed. If you must use treats to catch your horse, put a bucket out for each horse in the enclosure, and space the feed out to ensure that no one horse can dominate the feed piles or buckets.

Ensure that you are properly tacked up, that your saddle is adjusted and fits well, and that the cinch is securely tightened. Stirrups should allow for easy foot movement in or out (a good general rule is to have your ankle line up with the bottom of the stirrup).

Handle your horse often, and gently, to reinforce good behavior. Practice new things in a controlled environment, with supervision if necessary.

Do not try to pick up a horse's

feet unless you've been trained to do so. Have an experienced person show you this skill.

Never tie a lead rope to yourself, or wrap the reins around your hand. If a horse is startled or suddenly tries to pull away, you are at risk of being jerked off your feet, dragged, and seriously injured.

When riding, follow single file, and allow enough room between you and the horse in front to avoid conflict between the horses – at least one full horse-length, or more if the individual animals seem to need it. If space permits, you can ride abreast, but be alert to any restriction in the route ahead, and bring the horses back into single file before they start feeling crowded. While riding abreast, allow at least one body-width between the horses, to prevent contact or entanglement.

Choosing a Horse

When choosing a horse, consider who will be using it. Always match the horse to the rider's ability, and avoid the temptation to put more horse under a child than they need or can handle. For a novice rider, it is better to choose a horse that they will "grow out of" than one that you hope they can "grow into."



Operation Farm Safety 2012

The Farmers with Disabilities Program of the Saskatchewan Abilities Council is, again, pleased to provide farm safety presentations to Grades K-3 and Grades 4-6 for the school children in Saskatchewan.

These presentations provide children with the knowledge to stay safe on farms where they live or visit. The information will also help youth to develop safe work behaviours in any future work situation.

Materials are also provided for teachers and parents. Teachers can use the information to make farm safety a daily part of school activities. Parents can use the materials to help make the family farm a safer place to live and work.

To book your classroom presentation of about 45 minutes, please call the program coordinator:

Bill Thibodeau

Farmers with Disabilities Coordinator
Saskatchewan Abilities Council
2310 Louise Avenue
Saskatoon, SK S7J 2C1
Cell: (306)370-4510
Office: (306)385-7214
Fax: (306)373-2665
www.abilitiescouncil.sk.ca



Working together to enrich futures through abilities

Contact Dermatitis

Dr Kyle Cullingham, Dermatology Resident
University of Saskatchewan

Dermatitis is more commonly referred to as eczema which means an inflammation of the skin. Skin affected by eczema can become red, itchy, painful, scaly and swollen. Contact dermatitis occurs when the skin comes in contact with a substance that damages the outer layer of skin's surface causing the body's immune system to react to that substance.



There are 2 main types of contact dermatitis:

Allergic contact dermatitis (roughly 20-30%) is caused by an allergen that a person has come in contact with and the reaction can be delayed up to 48 hours. Poison ivy is the most common cause but many substances can bring about this type of reaction such as metals, dyes, fragrances, and pesticides. Some people develop this type of allergy even though they might have worked for years with the substance without problems. The rash can develop at the area of skin in contact with the allergen but can also spread to other parts of the body.

Irritant contact dermatitis (roughly 70-80%) is caused by repeated exposure to skin damaging chemicals such as harsh soaps, detergents, acids, cleaning products, and pesticides. These chemicals remove oil and moisture from the skin's surface making it more vulnerable to irritation and damage. If you already have a skin disease you are more likely to suffer from this reaction. You can have sudden, acute reactions with high concentrations of a chemical, or persistent, chronic reactions with weaker chemicals over many months and years of use.

Agriculture workers in particular are considered "high risk" to develop a contact dermatitis because they are exposed to physical, chemical and biological agents on a daily basis.

	COMMON IRRITANTS	COMMON ALLERGENS
Agriculture workers	Artificial fertilizers Disinfectants Pesticides Cleaners Gasoline Diesel Oil Plants and Grains	Rubber Oats and Barley Animal Feed Veterinary Medications Cement Plants Pesticides Wood Preservatives

To protect yourself from developing a contact dermatitis there are things you can do.

- Substitute some of these chemicals with less irritating ones, or avoid using them entirely if possible.
- Moisturize your skin frequently especially after hand washing with moisturizers that are fragrance free
- Use cotton liners if occlusive gloves are to be worn for long periods
- Wash and clean hands properly. Try using mild soaps or soapless cleansers. Avoid using harsh soaps and detergents unless absolutely necessary and avoid using solvents all together.
- Educate yourself on workplace risk factors including all substances you are working with and obtain the proper training of any personal protective equipment you use.
- If your dermatitis persists or you are concerned that it may be job related contact your doctor.

For more information please visit the Canadian Dermatology Association's website at <http://www.dermatology.ca/infosheets/index.html> or you can contact the author directly at kyle.cullingham@nosm.ca

Drinking Water and Human Health

Dr. Simon Kapaj, Public Health and Preventive Medicine Resident

Introduction

Water is essential to life and makes up about 2/3 of your body's weight. Every system in your body relies on water to function. Saskatchewan has one of the safest water supplies in the country. High quality drinking water is essential for a community's health and well-being. The quality of drinking water varies from community to community, depending on the type and condition of the source water from which it is drawn and the treatment that is applied.

The waterborne disease outbreaks in Walkerton, Ontario (May 2000) and North Battleford, Saskatchewan (April 2001) have increased efforts to improve drinking water systems and protect water sources in the province. The ultimate goal is to provide safe drinking water for all individuals across the province, regardless of location.

Where does drinking water come from?

Drinking water originates from surface water such as lakes, or groundwater such as an aquifer. A clean and secure supply of drinking water is essential to every community. The drinking water in Saskatchewan communities can be drawn from water sources close to the community or miles away. In both circumstances, when you realize where your drinking water comes from, it's important to think about not just the part of the reservoir or lake that you can see, but the entire watershed (the land area over which water flows into the lake or reservoir). In Saskatchewan, the two main types of drinking water systems are public and private systems.

*Public water systems serve the majority of people in the province and are regulated by Saskatchewan Environment. Public drinking water systems include all municipal systems and municipal supply wells that feed a

distribution system. Regional and rural pipelines and water plants operated by SaskWater belong to this group.

*Some small public systems are regulated by the Ministry of Health rather than Environment. These include individual on-site water systems serving restaurants, motels, campgrounds, small parks, municipal wells with no distribution systems, and systems with fewer than 15 connections or flows of less than 18 cubic meters per day. The Ministry of Health, through local health regions, provides oversight and advice to these small systems and addresses waterborne illnesses in systems of any size.

*Private drinking water systems include privately owned water systems such as those found on farms, rural homes, and cottages. Drinking water quality in privately owned systems is not strictly regulated, but local health regions would be able to interpret water test results and provide water treatment advice. The Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory (formerly the Provincial Laboratory) facilitates water testing, and SaskWater may also provide subsidized water testing.

What is in your drinking water?

The only way to know is to have it tested. In general, all water, regardless of source, contains some pollutants. Water moves in streams and filters through various layers of soil and rock. As a result, it absorbs the substances that it touches. Some of these substances are not harmful. However, at certain levels, minerals and man-made chemicals are considered contaminants that can make water unsafe. Contaminants can come from erosion of natural rock formations or substances discharged from factories or used on farms. Sources of

contaminants might be found in your neighborhood area or miles away. Your local water quality information indicates which contaminants are in your drinking water and the levels at which they are found. The Government of Saskatchewan has developed the website, www.SaskH20.ca, to provide water information and includes the latest drinking water advisories, community test results, water information, and water services.

Is your drinking water treated?

Untreated water from a river or lake often contains dirt and small amounts of certain contaminants. When it reaches the treatment plant, chemicals called coagulants are added to the water. In addition, this water flows through a filter for removal of the smallest contaminants like viruses and *Giardia*. Usually, groundwater is filtered through layers of the earth. Water pumped from wells generally contains less organic material than surface water and may not need to be treated in the same way.

Many small communities in Saskatchewan are working on improving their water systems. The owners of waterworks are implementing treatment methods that best deal with the quality and the characteristics of their water source and ensure their operators are trained. The most common drinking water treatment used is disinfection. Through this process, chlorine or another disinfectant is added to the water to kill bacteria and other germs.

What are the health effects of contaminants in drinking water?

Health Canada, together with the provinces and territories, has set guidelines for many contaminants that may occur in drinking water and pose a risk to human health. These guidelines are set to protect

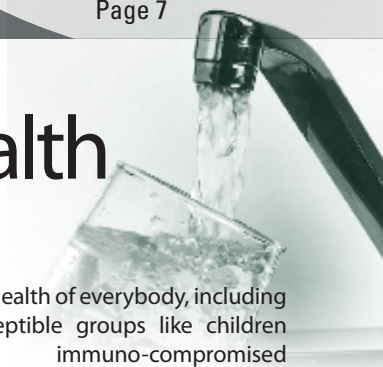
the health of everybody, including susceptible groups like children and immuno-compromised individuals.

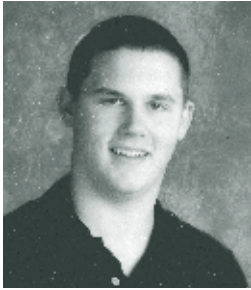
Illnesses acquired from drinking water can be caused by microorganisms such as bacteria, protozoa, algae, viruses, naturally occurring or manmade chemicals, or naturally occurring or manmade radioactive compounds. Local health authorities review the water test results and notify you if there is a potential acute or chronic health effect from contaminants in the drinking water.

- **Acute effects** occur within hours or days of the time that a person drinks the contaminated water. In drinking water, bacteria and viruses are the contaminants that can potentially cause acute health effects. Most people's immune systems can fight off these microbial contaminants and they typically don't have long-term effects. However, when high concentration levels occur, they can make people ill; they may even cause death for a person whose immune system is already weak, such as people with HIV/AIDS, or a person receiving cancer therapy.
- **Chronic effects** occur after people consume contaminated water at levels over Health Canada's safety standards. The drinking water contaminants that can have chronic effects are chemicals such as pesticides or metals such as arsenic. Some of these chronic effects include cancer, skin, liver, or reproductive issues.

Conclusion

- Water is very important for life and its quality is determinant of your health.
- The safety of drinking water is a paramount for the prevention of waterborne diseases.
- If you get your drinking water from a private well, get the water tested to ensure the drinking water is safe.





RM of Bjorkdale No. 167 Student Awarded SARM Scholarship

Ty Kehrig from the RM of Bjorkdale No. 167 is this year's winner of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities 90th Anniversary \$1000 Student Scholarship in Agricultural Safety and Rural Health. Ty is planning to enter the College of Agriculture and Bioresources at the University of Saskatchewan in the fall.

Special 25th Anniversary Celebration Scholarship Awards for 2013

Three Student Scholarships for \$1500 each

Are you ...

- Enrolled in Grade 12 for the 2012-2013 school year?
- Planning on studying at a post-secondary Saskatchewan school in the fall of 2013?

Do you ...

- Have a farming background and live in a rural area?
- Have parents/guardians who own/rent land and pay taxes to a Rural Municipality?

Yes? Great!

- Download an application form from <http://www.cchssma.usask.ca/ahsn/scholarships.php> or get one from your RM office.
- Write a 1,000 word essay on Changes in Attitudes in Agricultural Safety Through the Generations
- 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 February 2, 2013

Farm Stress Line

Toll Free: 1-800-667-4442

24 hours per day.

Seven days per week.

Calls to the Farm Stress Line are answered by Mobile Crisis Services, a non-profit, community based agency providing crisis intervention services in Saskatchewan since 1974.

Whether it is information, conflict or crisis, the first step is communication.

Call before the problem becomes a crisis.

Network Membership

There are currently 210 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:



Saskatchewan
Ministry of
Agriculture



Farm Credit Canada



the co-operators
A Better Place For You™



From the Editors:

Send your ideas, comments and suggestions to:

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Would you like
regular email updates
from the Network?

If so, email us at
aghealthandsafety@usask.ca