

Agricultural Equipment Road Safety

With the boundaries of rural and urban America blending more and more everyday, it is important for all motorists to be aware and cautious of farm equipment on the roads. According to the National Safety Council, approximately 1/3 of fatal tractor accidents occur on public roads. In order to decrease the chance of a collision, motorists should follow these 6 rules of the road.

Slow down when you see a piece of agricultural equipment. Most farm equipment is designed to travel at speeds of only 15-25 mph.

Watch for Slow-Moving-Vehicle (SMV) signs. SMVs are required for vehicles traveling less than 25 mph.

Watch for hand signals. Just because a tractor veers right does not mean the operator is pulling over to allow someone to pass. The size of farm equipment often dictates the necessity of wide turns.

Pass farm equipment cautiously. Even when passing safely and legally, the turbulence created by a vehicle may cause the machinery to sway and become unstable. Do not always expect operators to drive their equipment onto the shoulder of the road. Driving with one set of tires on loose-surfaced shoulders substantially increases the risk of overturn.

Watch for flashing amber lights. This type of light often marks the far right and left of farm equipment. Also watch for reflective tape marking extremities and sides of equipment.

Remember that agricultural operators have a right to drive their equipment on the road.



moving at 15 mph.

Consider these *Fast Facts* next time you encounter agricultural equipment on the road!

- A car moving at 50 mph has less than 10 seconds to avoid a collision with a tractor moving 20 mph that is 400 feet ahead.
 - It only takes 5 seconds for a motorist driving 55 mph to close a gap the length of a football field when approaching a tractor
- Nearly half of all incidents between motorists and farm implements involve one of two scenarios- the left hand turn collision or the rear-end collision.

Road Safety Resources

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE176>

<http://richland.osu.edu/agriculture/farm-equipment-safety-reminder>

<http://www.hobbyfarms.com/farm-industry-news/farm-equipment-road-safety.aspx>

<http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/docs/Roadway/RuralRoadSafety.pdf>