

Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation

Prevention through comprehensive research and investigation

INVESTIGATION/RESEARCH

Farmer Died As Result of Starting Tractor on Ground

In 2004, a 78-year-old male farmer was severely injured when he was run over by the rear wheel of his 1960s vintage model 1650 Oliver tractor. The deceased had hooked up a 150-gallon pull-type boom sprayer so he could eradicate weeds near his 60-acre soybean field. After dismounting from the tractor and mixing the solution in the sprayer, he attempted to start the tractor while standing on the ground. Unbeknownst to him, the tractor was in forward gear and when he started it he was unable to move out of the way of the rear tire and the tire ran over him. Figure 1 shows the victim's probable location on the ground in front of the tire while he started the tractor and the direction of the tractor's movement. He was taken to the local hospital. He died approximately three weeks later as a result of the injuries sustained at the time of the incident.

IN ORDER TO PREVENT SIMILAR INCIDENTS IN THE FUTURE

- **Start** tractors only when you are on the tractor platform sitting in the operator's seat.
 - **Check** the engine throttle position
 - **Disengage** the clutch
 - **Shift** transmission into neutral or park
 - **Set** the brakes
 - **Ensure** the power take off is disengaged
- **Establish** a farm safety plan that includes work rules such as starting the tractor from a seated position on the operator's platform.
- **Recognize** potential human factor limitations associated with aging.



Figure 1. MIFACE researcher standing in victim's probable location while starting tractor and direction of tractor movement

DID YOU KNOW?

- Written farm safety plans help to identify health and safety hazards on your farm resulting in increased efficiency and lower costs.
- Since 2001, 2 Michigan farmers have been run over by their tractor while starting the tractor from the ground.
- Since 2001, 16 Michigan farmers who have died conducting farming activities have been 65+years of age.
- Since 2001, tractors have been involved in 33 of Michigan farmer work-related fatalities.

MIFACE: www.chm.msu.edu

PNASH:

www.uidaho.edu/bae/agsafety/frmsaf01.pdf
Farm and Ranch Safety Management, 4th Edition, Copyright 1994, Deere & Company, Moline, Illinois.

MIOSHA Section D – Agricultural Health and Safety Standards:

www.michigan.gov/mioshastandards

Click on Agriculture.

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TO REPORT A NEW WORKPLACE FATALITY TO MIOSHA

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MICHIGAN FATALITY ASSESSMENT &
CONTROL EVALUATION

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