

# Driving behind farm equipment: Do your part

**S**pring planting and fall harvest are busy times. Farmers and workers have big equipment and implements on the road. Navigating roadways can be dangerous for farm equipment operators and auto drivers who follow behind them. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 410 farmers and farm workers died from work-related injuries in 2019. Transportation incidents, which included tractor overturns, were the leading cause of death for these farmers and farm workers.

Follow these safety tips to make it safer for everyone involved.

## Equipment operators

- Make sure all flashers and lights are operational.
- Drive as far to the right side of the road as possible when going around a curve.
- Pull over and allow vehicles to pass when traffic builds up behind you.
- Take care at railroad crossings.
- Avoid traveling during busy traffic times.
- Be mindful of the height and width of machinery, watching power lines, bridges, and other hazards.
- Along with turn signals, use hand signals.
- Stay rested; do not drive when you are too tired or hungry.
- Keep a first-aid kit in case of accidents.

## Auto drivers

- Think about how long it will take to get to your destination and add extra time for busy farm roads.
- Give farmers plenty of room on the road. If a piece of equipment takes up the entire road, pull into a driveway or other area and wait for them to pass.
- When passing, be sure you do so in a passing zone and ensure that there is clear visibility around farm equipment. Watch for oncoming vehicles.
- Go slow. Farm operators often stop or turn into fields. In addition, cars going at or over the speed limit can catch up to farm machinery quickly, since farmers in equipment move slowly.
- Do not assume that a farmer can move over in narrow areas; it is not always possible.
- Honk or motion when passing farmers. They may not see you or know you are there; their equipment is big and noisy.
- Do not tailgate; the farmer often cannot see you.
- Do not pass and then slow suddenly in front of equipment with implements behind it or farm trucks full of grain. They cannot stop quickly.
- Farmers make very wide turns; (516402) give them plenty of time and room.

These are a few tips to make it safer for both the equipment operator and auto drivers and to provide a more pleasant drive for all.

For information about safety around electricity, including farm and ranch safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](http://SafeElectricity.org).



**SHARE THE ROAD**  
*with Farmers*

Farm season means sharing the road with large farm equipment, which can be wide and slow. Farmers must move slowly in large equipment, but public roads are often the only way to get from point A to point B.

When you find yourself following or meeting large farm equipment on the road, take a deep breath and **do the following to keep everyone safe:**

- 1** Be alert and cautious, and give large farm equipment and other slow-moving vehicles space.
- 2** Do not pass in a "No Passing Zone," or in any area where it is not safe to do so, such as intersections, bridges and railroad crossings, among others.
- 3** Make sure the tractor is not trying to make a left turn before you pass on the left.
- 4** Do not tailgate. Following too closely means you could be in the operator's blind spot.
- 5** Be careful when you do get the chance to pass. Oftentimes, farmers will move their equipment over when it is safe to do so.

Source: Texas Table Top (Texas Farm Bureau)

 SafeElectricity.org®

# Electrical safety for emergency responders



On the evening of August 10, Oconto Electric Cooperative hosted 55 of our local emergency responders at the co-op for electrical safety training. The training was presented by OEC's Line Foreman John Havemeier and Communications/Marketing Specialist Katie Jagiello. The group learned about electrical hazards that are present every day and how to be prepared for any encounter they may have. Topics we briefly covered were: electrical hazards, downed line response, overhead power line hazards, underground electrical hazards, dangers of solar energy, pole and grass fires, and electric vehicles. At the end of the evening Havemeier had equipment for them to view and answered questions. Jagiello aimed to ensure that firefighters knew the specific potential dangers related to electric vehicles.

## Welcome

Please join us in welcoming our newest team members



**Jim McCabe**  
System Engineer



**Maguire Girtz**  
Apprentice Lineman



**Christopher Lemirande**  
Apprentice Lineman



**Jason Boor**  
Information Technology



**Joseph LeBreck**  
Hydro Maintenance





# "Bag Lunch To Go"

Wednesday, September 14



From 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.  
pick up your brown bag lunch at OEC headquarters!

Primal Eats Pulled Pork Sandwich, BBQ Sauce, Chips,  
Homemade Cookie, Beverage.

Cost \$8 for the meal or  
\$4 for sandwich only.

Proceeds go to OEC 2022 Employee Charities:  
New View Industries  
Sportsmens with Heart, Inc.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Our faucets and appliances use a lot of hot water. You can lower your water heating costs by using less hot water in your home. Water heating accounts for a large portion of home energy bills. (180802)

To save energy (and money!) used for water heating, repair any leaky faucets, install low-flow fixtures and insulate accessible hot water lines. When it's time to purchase a new washing machine or dishwasher, look for models that are ENERGY STAR®-certified

*Source: Dept. of Energy*





## Change Matters Grant Recipients

**C**hange Matters is a special grant that Community Change distributes due to the generosity of the former Bay Lakes Cooperative. This grant is meant to provide far-reaching enhancement for a neighborhood or community. \$2,000 was awarded to the Brazeau Rescue Squad. The funding was used towards the purchase of a LUCAS device. The device provides benefits to cardiac arrest patients by delivering consistent chest compressions, even under difficult conditions, for extended periods of time.

\$3,000 was awarded to the Oconto Falls Police Department. They are working towards the purchase of a K9 Unit to assist with the drug plague in their community.

We will be closed  
on Labor Day



Monday, Sept. 5



We will be hosting an  
Electronic Recycling  
Event on October 14

Please watch the  
October magazine for  
full details.

## HIDDEN ACCOUNT NUMBERS

Oconto Electric Cooperative hides two account numbers in the local pages of the *Wisconsin Energy Cooperative News* each month. If you spot your account number, call our office before you receive the next issue, and OEC will give you a \$15 credit on your electric bill or a \$25 credit if you have a load management receiver. The August account numbers belonged to Alan & Nicole Nowak, Coleman, and Bruce & Michele Bushmaker, Oconto.

Byron C. Nolde, CEO

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Katie Jagiello, Editor

