

June
2011
Update

Farmsafe WA Alliance

-Inspiring safe farming-

Inspiring Safe Farming

Safety in Schools Week 2011



We are
relocating to
new offices
within the
Department of
Agriculture and
Food complex
in Forrestfield
on the 1st July.

All contact
details will
remain the same

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Safety in schools week is an annual event that aims to reduce injuries to children by encouraging schools to focus on safety promotion. It seeks to develop the capacity of schools to focus on child injury prevention by linking them with health agencies, public health units and injury prevention specialists.

As the lead agency for organizing and coordinating Safety in Schools Week, Kidsafe WA has successfully managed and coordinated the 13th annual launch. Kidsafe WA works in partnership with other organisations to advocate for child injury prevention measures in the community. As a collaborative partner, Farmsafe WA was again involved in both the Metro and Regional launch. The Farmsafe WA project team: Alisa, Monika and Alicia addressed the students with an interactive safety presentation on the hazards associated with living on or visiting farms and rural properties.

The Metropolitan launch ran on the 9th of June with Comet Bay Primary in Secret Harbour as the host school and the official opening and address made by Scott Phillips and Sue Wicks of

Kidsafe WA. This years launch also marked the launch of the Kidsafe WA Interactive website. The Regional Launch held on the 17th June at East Narrogin Primary School proved a similar success with Mr. Terry Waldron MLA in attendance.

Farmsafe WA is a proud supporter of Safety in Schools Week and will continue to work closely with the other injury prevention alliance members in order to achieve a sustainable reduction in childhood injury throughout Western Australia.

Congratulations and appreciation to Kidsafe WA for their fantastic work.



New Benefit for Farmsafe WA Members

As a result of the recent OH&S project, funded by the Department of Health, Farmsafe WA is developing a new 'members only' section on their website to provide access to a new OH&S audit tool.

This initiative was a direct result of the Farmsafe WA Safety Needs Survey, conducted in 2010, which indicated the farming community required a more user friendly, cost effective and less time consuming OH&S audit tool. In collaboration with partners, OH&S experts and the farming community, the new audit tool will initially cover four risk areas:

- Occupational Noise
- Chemical Storage, Handling and Disposal
- Slips, Trips and Falls
- OH&S responsibilities for employers, employees and contractors.

Workshops that occurred in Corrigin, Brookton, Cuballing, Lower Chittering and Mingenew delivered OH&S information and tested the new audit tool on farms. Results proved very positive. A key recommendation which came directly

from workshop attendees was to make the audit tool available via the Farmsafe WA website and consequently this resulted in the creation of a special members section. This will allow access to the audit tool, OH&S general information and a forum where members can share their OH&S concerns and best practice options.

The modules will include audit points which correspond to legislative requirements and best practice options. This members section is currently under construction and expected to be available for use by end of July. Further funding and sponsorship will be sought to fully develop the audit tool and to cover a wider range of topics. Ultimately, we hope to offer an interactive web-based application to allow users to quickly search for their required information in a series of 'learning library modules'

It is the aim of Farmsafe WA to continue seeking new and innovative ideas that will protect farming families and workers and improve farm business performance through better safety awareness and practices.

Handling Cattle

Injuries from cattle relate to a number of factors— inadequate yard design, lack of training of handlers, unsafe work practices, and the weight, sex, stress factor and temperament of animals.

Spot the hazard

- ✓ Check accident records to identify potential risks.
- ✓ Consider situations that cause stress and injury to handlers and stock.
- ✓ Take into account sex, weight and temperament of stock.
- ✓ Consider effects of weather and herding on animal behavior, and allow time for settling down.
- ✓ Check potential hazards and safety advantages of stock facilities, including mechanical aids and work layout.
- ✓ Consider what training is required before a person can confidently and competently handle stock.

Assess the risk

- ✓ Identify which tasks have most frequently been linked with accidents.
- ✓ Discuss safety concerns of handlers in regard to various tasks.
- ✓ Check each identified hazard for likelihood and severity of injury.
- ✓ Assess proposed safeguards and safe procedures for other hazards.

Make the changes

Here are some suggestions for improving safety in cattle handling.

- ✓ Always plan ahead. Prepare and communicate safe work practices. Get assistance if necessary.
- ✓ Wear appropriate clothing, including protective footwear and a hat for sun protection.
- ✓ Make use of facilities and aids— headrails, branding cradles, whips, drafting canes, dogs etc.
- ✓ Know the limitations of yourself and others- work within those limitations.
- ✓ Respect cattle- they have the strength and speed to cause injury.

Facilities and conditions

- ✓ Yards and sheds should be strong and of a size to match the cattle being handled.
- ✓ Good yard design assists the flow of stock. Avoid sharp, blind corners, and ensure gates are well positioned.
- ✓ Keep facilities in good repair and free from protruding rails, bolts, wire etc.
- ✓ Where cattle need restraining, use crushes, headrails, cradles etc.
- ✓ Footholds and well-placed access ways are important.
- ✓ Try to maintain yards in non-slippery condition.
- ✓ Cattle are more unpredictable during cold, windy weather.

The Stock

- ✓ Hazards vary according to the age, sex, breed, weight, horn status, temperament and training of animals.
- ✓ Approach cattle quietly, and make sure they are aware of your presence.
- ✓ Bulls are more aggressive during mating season and extremely dangerous when fighting. Separate into different yards where appropriate.
- ✓ Heifers can also be dangerous at weaning time.

- ✓ Isolated cattle often become more stressed and are more likely to charge when approached.
- ✓ Cattle with sharp horns are dangerous— dehorning is recommended where practicable. Dehorned and polled cattle can still cause injury.

Cattle yarding

- ✓ Avoid working in overstocked yards where you risk being crushed or trampled.
- ✓ While drafting cattle through a gate, work from one side to avoid being knocked down by an animal trying to get through.
- ✓ Take care when working with cattle in a crush, eg. to vaccinate, apply tags etc. A sudden movement by stock could crush your arms against rails or posts.
- ✓ When closing a gate behind cattle in a crush or small yard, stand to one side, or with one foot on the gate in case the mob forces the gate back suddenly.

Kicking and butting

- ✓ To avoid kick injuries, attempt to work outside the animals kicking range or directly against the animal, where the effect of being kicked will be minimized.
- ✓ In dairies there is a high risk of being kicked. Try to follow a regular routine so as to not alarm cows.
- ✓ When working on an animals head, use head bail to restrain it from sudden movement forward or back.
- ✓ Take care when using hazardous equipment, such as brands or knives for castrating or bang tailing.



Stud cattle

- ✓ When working with stud cattle, train animals to accept intensive handling through gradual familiarization, eg. grooming, washing, clipping.
- ✓ When leading cattle on a halter, never wrap the lead rope around your arm or hand. If the animal gets out of control, you could be dragged.
- ✓ Bulls should be fitted with a nose ring. When being led, their heads should be held up by the nose lead.

Hygiene

- ✓ Be aware of the risks of contracting such diseases as leptospirosis or Q fever when working with animals. These diseases are transmitted through contact with blood, saliva and urine.
- ✓ Consider vaccinating herds against disease.

Shearing

Hazards in shearing generally involve machinery, electrical fittings, sheep yard design, slippery and obstructed floors, sharp tools, equipment and protrusions, chemicals, heat stress, and strain injuries from repetitive awkward and strenuous work.

Spot the hazard

Conduct a safety audit of shearing sheds, pens, flooring, machinery, wool presses, electrical fittings, connections and cables, lightning, ventilation, and the experience and safety training of those involved, particularly young workers.

Assess the risk

Assess identified hazards for likelihood to cause injury or harm. Assess also the potential seriousness of the injury or harm. Consider various safeguards and safe procedures, and assess these for other possible hazards before deciding a plan of action.

Make the changes

Many safety innovations have been developed and implemented to reduce shearing injuries. The following suggestions are to help farmers to minimise risks:

- ☑ Design steps, ramps, pens, entrances, flooring, gates and latches to minimise the risk of strain and trip injuries to shearers and helpers;
- ☑ Ensure sheds are well lit and ventilated; cool in summer and draught free in winter;
- ☑ Keep a suitably equipped first aid box in the shearing shed; and
- ☑ Have suitable, functional fire-fighting equipment available in shearing sheds and quarters.



Machinery

- ☑ Keep shearing machinery safely guarded to prevent catching limbs, clothing or fleeces.
- ☑ Place stopping mechanisms within reading reach in case of emergency.
- ☑ Ensure a safe distance between shearing positions, to prevent the risk of down tubes clashing and creating cut hazards.
- ☑ Keep handpieces well maintained to eliminate vibration injuries.
- ☑ Choose quiet machinery or isolate noisy machinery to prevent hearing damage.
- ☑ Choose wool presses designed not to trap workers' hands.
- ☑ Consider having electric motors on wool presses to reduce noise and air pollution.
- ☑ Consider providing back support harnesses and equipment for shearers.
- ☑ Install a slipping clutch (safety clutch) to prevent lock up of the handpiece.

Manual Handling

- ☑ Keep shearing floors and passage ways clean and clear of obstructions.
- ☑ Ensure floors in catching pens are kept clean and dry to reduce slip hazards. Battens running parallel to the drag are recommended in catching pens.
- ☑ Allow sheep to empty out and settle down before moving them into the shed at least eight hours prior to shearing.
- ☑ Consider providing back support equipment for shearers.
- ☑ Keep shed hands clear of shearers unless they need to be there, or are called on for assistance.
- ☑ Keep dogs out of the working area, and don't tie them up where people can trip over them.
- ☑ Minimise the distance necessary to drag sheep ie 3metres or less.
- ☑ Eliminate right angle turns during dragging of sheep.

Fitness and health

- ☑ Shearers and rural workers should exercise regularly and eat a well balanced diet to guard against injury and maintain the required energy levels.
- ☑ In hot weather, take regular drinks of cool water or non-alcohol fluids to avoid heat stress.
- ☑ Maintain a good posture during physical work, and use your legs to lift, not your back.
- ☑ Prior to each two hour shearing run, conduct warm up exercises as most injuries occur during the first few hours of shearing or when returning from extended break.
- ☑ During extended lay-off periods ensure a gradual return to shearing.

Farm Chemicals– Storage and Disposal

Stored farm chemicals can cause injury or harm if spillages occur, containers leak, labels fall off, or untrained people including children have access to storage areas. Transport of chemicals, and disposal of chemical containers and other wastes, pose separate hazards that can also affect the environment.

Spot the hazard

Read and follow the labels and MSDSs (material safety data sheets) for information on hazards, personal protective equipment, and safe handling, transport, storage and disposal for each chemical. Ensure chemicals are stored in a lockable, well lit and well ventilated area, separated from other chemicals that may cause them to react dangerously. Be aware that solvents in some chemical concentrates can escape as harmful vapours unless containers are well sealed.



Assess the risk

For each chemical hazard identified, assess the likelihood of and injury, harmful reaction or a hazardous incident occurring. Assess also whether an injury or harm is serious or imminent, and whether steps to minimize or eliminated the risk should be taken immediately. Consider proposed control measures for their likely effectiveness.

Make the changes

Here are some of the ways of improving safety in the storage and disposal of farm chemicals .

- Store chemicals in a well ventilated, bunded, and well lit shed that is lockable and has an impervious floor and impervious shelving.
- Storage shed must not be in flood areas.
- Check the label and MSDS for advice about storage.
- Store away from respirators, and other protective clothing and equipment.
- Ensure an emergency shower is available near the storage and mixing area.

- Keep pesticides separate from animal feeds, fertilizer, seeds and other chemicals.
- Ensure appropriate materials are located close by to clean up any spills. These may include soil, water, absorbent pillows, lime or sand.
- Store chemicals in the original containers with labels intact and MSDS in a register nearby. If labels come off always re-label the container.
- Never store chemicals in food or drink containers.
- Keep incompatible chemical separated.
- Ensure that the storage shed is adequately signposted.

Disposal

- Check the label and MSDS for advice on disposal of chemicals and containers.
- Triple rinse empty containers to remove all traces of the chemical.
- Uncap, puncture and crush all rinsed containers.
- Where possible return containers to manufacturer or supplier, or ask your local government about its requirements for disposal.

Transport

- Avoid transporting chemicals with food, water, animal feed or other reactive hazardous substances.
- Secure hazardous substances on the vehicle so they can't move or fall.
- Keep a record of the chemicals you are carrying.
- Carry suitable personal protective equipment, including respiratory equipment if necessary, in case of emergency.

Care for the environment

- Observe any warnings on the label regarding toxicity to non-target areas (animals or plants).
- Contact your local government authority for information on the procedures for safe disposal of containers or remaining chemicals.



FarmReady REIMBURSEMENT GRANT RESUMES FOR ChemCert WA TRAINING

ChemCert WA is pleased to advise that the FarmReady Reimbursement Grant resumes on 1 July 2011 which means that growers, their immediate family and managerial workers can claim the **full cost** of ChemCert WA courses back in reimbursement. Growers who can also get a group of 15 together in their area will be provided with a trainer.

Full details of ChemCert WA courses are on the website www.chemcertwa.com.au or contact Janis Hadley on **9341 5325** for further details.



Handling Pigs

Pig handlers face injuries from the size, strength and temperament of the animals they tend. Injuries may also relate to training of handlers, the safe design of pens, lanes and other yarding, and the administering of drugs and chemicals. Noise in pig sheds can reach levels that require hearing protection.

Spot the hazard

Check the safety of the pens, floors and lanes, handling and restraining of animals, safety training for new and young workers, safe lifting methods, safe use of chemicals and protection from diseases carried by pigs. Study working injury records for evidence of hazardous jobs and situations.



Assess the risk

Assess whether any of the hazards identified are likely to cause injury or harm, and base safety decisions on the likelihood and possible severity of the injury or harm.

Make the Changes

The following suggestions are to help minimise or eliminate the risk of injury or harm in pig handling:

- ☑ Check pens and lanes are large and strong enough for the pigs being handled;
- ☑ Ensure pen design assists the smooth flow of pigs—avoid sharp, blind corners and ensure gates are well positioned;
- ☑ Keep facilities in good repair and free from protruding rails, bolts, wire and rubbish;
- ☑ Where pigs need restraining, use crushes and nose ropes; and
- ☑ Try to maintain non-slippery conditions, especially in lanes and loading yards.

Stock Factors

- ☑ Safety in pig handling varies according to a number of factors—age, sex, breed, weight, temperament and training of the animal.
- ☑ Boars can be aggressive and unpredictable. Treat them with caution.
- ☑ Boars are most aggressive during mating, and extremely dangerous when fighting.

- ☑ Prevent boars from coming in contact with each other at all times.
- ☑ When moving boars, use a drafting board.

Lifting Pigs

- ☑ When lifting pigs, get assistance where possible.
- ☑ When lifting alone, sit the pig on its hindquarters, squat down, take a firm hold of the back legs, pull the animal firmly against your body and lift, use your legs and not your back.
- ☑ Remember, when lifting a pig this way, make sure the pig's head is positioned so that it cannot bring its head back into your face.

Chemicals, Vaccinations and Injections

- ☑ Read labels on chemicals and antibiotic containers carefully, follow manufacturers' instructions and safety directions.
- ☑ Sterilize needles, teeth cutters and ear pliers, and ensure operators observe hygienic practices.
- ☑ Observe recommended withholding periods for drugs and chemicals before pigs are slaughtered.
- ☑ Wear appropriate protective clothing.
- ☑ If headaches or any other discomfort is suffered after handling chemicals, seek medical advice and have appropriate tests.
- ☑ If possible avoid chemicals that have caused headache or other discomfort in the future, and use full protective clothing and breathing filters when handling chemicals in the feed mill.
- ☑ Ensure dosage rates are maintained.



Transmittable diseases

- ☑ Animals carry diseases that can be transmitted to humans. Be familiar with the symptoms so you can tell if these diseases exist in the herd.
- ☑ If signs of disease appear, have the disease confirmed and the animals tested. If the disease is present, treat affected animals appropriately and vaccinate to prevent further occurrence. Maintain a vaccination program.
- ☑ Maintain personal hygiene at all times.

Safety Induction

Facts

Injuries to inexperienced workers account for a substantial amount of workplace injuries. When a new worker is engaged for full time, casual or seasonal work, they need to be provided with the information, instruction, training and supervision necessary for them to carry out their job safely. It cannot be assumed that they have sufficient prior knowledge, training or experience.

An induction needs to be carried out for each new worker. Induction for new workers will help make the property a safer and more productive workplace. The induction, information, instruction and training you must provide includes;

- The occupational safety and health responsibilities of both the employer and the employee (sections 19 and 20 of the OSH Act);
- Arrangements for the reporting of safety hazards and injuries;
- Safety and health procedures relevant to the workers job; and
- How safety and health information can be assessed.

Training

To be both productive and safe on the farm, workers need to be competent to confidently and safely carry out their work. A competent person is one who has acquired through training, qualification or experience, or a combination of them, the knowledge and skills to carry out a specific task.

Younger workers need to be given extra safety consideration as they generally have little or no experience in a working environment. The type of training required will vary depending on the tasks to be performed.

Supervision

As rural properties can be hazardous, it is important that as an employer, you ensure workers are following the established safe work procedures. To determine the level of supervision necessary the competence, experience and age of each worker must be taken into consideration.

Emergency procedures and first aid

Procedures must be established to deal with emergencies and for the prompt reporting of injuries should they occur. All people must be familiar with the procedures to ensure action is taken with out undue delay.

Hazard and injury reporting

A system must be in place to enable hazards to be reported to a responsible person so that a record can be made and action taken to rectify the hazard. Similarly any injury that occurs to any person on the property needs to be reported to the employer.

The employer has a lawful responsibility to notify WorkSafe of deaths and certain injuries that occur on the property.

Emergency procedures and first aid

The law

Under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* and regulations, the person who has responsibility for the workplace has:

- Specific obligations for emergency evacuations– including having and evacuation procedure in place to protect anyone at the workplace in the event of an emergency; and
- A general 'duty of care' obligation to prepare for potential emergencies that might occur– including identifying potential hazards that could arise in case of an emergency and ensuring that workers will not be exposed to them.

Procedures need to be developed for emergencies such as:

- Accidents;
- Medical emergencies;
- Fire, both structural and bush fires;
- Cyclones/ destructive winds; and
- Floods

It is best to have emergency telephone numbers and call signs readily available as part of the emergency procedures. In addition, the address of the property and easy directions on how to get there are vital for emergency procedures. A list of emergency telephone numbers should include:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hospital | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Police station |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Doctor | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shire office |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ambulance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Poisons information centre 13 11 26 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fire brigade | |

First Aid

The initial treatment a person receives directly after an injury, accident or when they become ill at work is extremely important.

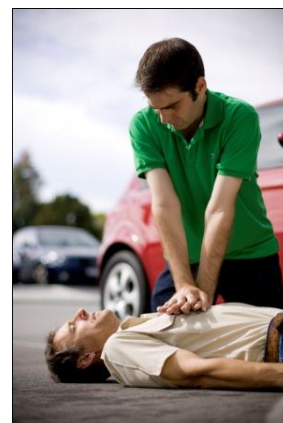
First aid kit

A first aid kit may be of any size, shape, or type providing it is large enough to contain all the supplies required to suit the property and the types of injuries that may occur. First aid kits need to be provided and located to ensure they are immediately accessible. Access for people working in isolated or remote locations must be taken into account. Additional information on or near the top of a first aid kit should include:

- The name, address and telephone number of the nearest medical or emergency service; and
- Instructions for emergency treatment of injuries that may be specific to the workplace.

First aid training

The level of training for first aid needs to be determined when first aid facilities and services are being planned. As a general rule, the more remote the property is from professional medical help, the higher the standard of first aid training required. As an absolute minimum one person who is at the property all the time must hold current first aid qualifications.



Media Release

Rural blokes– don't be too tough to talk to your rural GP

International Men's Health Week

Country blokes deserve to be happy and healthy and their first steps towards making sure they are, and stay, that way, is to visit their rural doctor.

Dr Peter Rischbieth, Vice president of the Rural Doctors Association of Australia and a GP in Murray Bridge in rural SA, said that regular visits to a doctor is the most important step in improving men's health outcomes.

"While the seasons have turned and the prices are high, many country blokes are still feeling the physical and the emotional results of weathering a number of tough years," Dr Rischbieth said.

In most areas of health men have the worse outcomes than women, and men in the country have even higher health risks due to their location, work and lifestyle.

Men are more likely to have high blood pressure, misuse alcohol and have a low consumption of fruit and vegetables– all factors increasing their risk of ill health.

We need our men to be healthy and strong so by taking preventative action we can reduce the danger of major health risks including stroke, cancer, cardiovascular problems including heart attacks strokes, as well as depression.

Start an open discussion with friends and family and, if you are in the age group that needs it, get a regularly yearly check up with your GP who will be able to check for all

age appropriate health risks, answer any questions about your health and outline the steps to take to make sure you stay healthy for the future," Dr Rischbieth said.

One in six Australian men will experience clinical depression in their lifetime and many rural men are at high risk because of their stressful lifestyles.

Factors such as drought or flood-induced financial difficulties, stock loss and the constant physical and mental demands of farming work and operating rural businesses places enormous pressure on men in the bush. They can often be isolated from friends and family and sometimes find it difficult to know where to turn for help.

"it is important that men realise when they are getting overwhelmed and know how to get assistance," Dr Rischbieth said.

Recognising the symptoms of depression in yourself and others can be the first step to beating it.

Symptoms include tiredness, irritability, sleep disturbance, and loss of interest in work or other activities.

Remember that there are services out there to help you or you can chat with your GP, the sooner you seek help, the sooner you can start getting back to your old self.

Available for interview: Dr Peter Rischbieth on 0408 813 143.
Alternative media contact: Ineke Kulper on 0408 669 638

Do you have a Safety and Health Action Plan in place on your property?

FREE ON FARM ADVISORY SERVICE

A fully accredited advisor will conduct a non threatening risk assessment of your property and prepare a safety and health action plan.

Presentations are made to small groups on farms and over a period of four hours plus can be conducted on a weekend if more suitable.

Throughout the advisory visit there is an opportunity to raise concerns and issues regarding all aspects of occupational health and safety on rural properties. The host is provided with a written set of recommendations for the property and attendees from nearby properties will be provided with the knowledge to complete a safety check on their own property.

Areas which have historically been of concern include workshop, silos, chemical sheds, machinery and 4 wheel motorbikes.

If anyone is interested in these valuable workshops or has any questions, please contact Farmsafe WA Alliance on **9359 4118** or email: admin@farmsafewa.org

Workshop overview:

- Outline and reasons for the workshop.
- Definition of hazards and risks.
- Types of control measures which can be implemented.



Safe use of tractors with attachments

Tractors are, by far, the most dangerous piece of equipment on Australian farms. About 20 people are killed on Australian farms each year while using tractors – more than the number killed by farm utilities, motorbikes and quad bikes combined. Many more people are injured. This can happen on any size of farm and to anyone regardless of age or type of tractor.

Agricultural tractors include a broad range and variety of vehicles, from around half a tonne in weight to more than 25 tonnes. They may be rigid or articulated, tyre or tracked, two-wheel drive, front-wheel assist and four-wheel drive, single or multi-wheeled per axle.

Tractors handle a variety of attachments. Even if the tractor itself is well set up for safe use, a new attachment introduces a new set of hazards. Combinations of tractor and attachment require competence and experience to set up, operate and maintain.

Planning and selecting the right equipment for the job is a key step before you start. You should think through the tasks, consider the type of equipment necessary and the terrain to ensure you select the right tractor and attachments for the job. This will result in a reduced risk of injury or death. It

also includes benefits such as better tractor efficiency, longer equipment life and lower repair costs.

An electronic version of the “Safe Use of Tractors with



Attachments” handbook for workplaces, can be downloaded from www.commerce.wa.gov.au or phone Farmsafe WA Alliance on 9359 4118 for a hard copy.



FARMSAFE WA MEMBERSHIP

Become a member and strengthen the relationship between Farmsafe WA and your community.

For more information call us on 9359 4118 or email admin@farmsafewa.org



Farmsafe WA Alliance continues to receive support from

