

Emergency Care and Rescue on the Farm

Every year many farm individuals die, or their injuries are aggravated after a farm accident because they were either not located promptly, or the first individuals to arrive upon the scene were not prepared to help them. Planning which establishes check-in times, work locations, and emergency procedures will greatly reduce the potential for tragedy. In addition, communication devices, such as cell phones and radios, may facilitate a call for help and can greatly increase chances for rescue.



According to a study by Dr. Frederick Rivara, completed in 1997 of data collected nationally from 1990-1993 there has been a 39 percent decline in the rate of fatalities to children. One of the reasons for this decline is most likely improved EMS and trauma care. More injury victims are being transported to hospitals faster, allowing them to be resuscitated from their injuries during the first “golden” hour, with a resultant improvement in outcome. High quality regional trauma care has probably contributed to the decline in mortality.

To continue this downward trend in deaths a few simple precautions can have a significant impact:

- Encourage the whole family to develop a “what if” plan. Predetermine appropriate behavior if an emergency does arise.
- Establish a check-in procedure for workers in remote areas.
- Contact the emergency providers who will be responding to your farm. Provide them with a site plan to aid in their response.
- Have a number of people on the farm trained in emergency CPR and first aid.
- Post emergency numbers and clear, concise directions to the farm by each phone.
- In the event you have to call for help:
 1. Stay calm and listen carefully to the questions and instructions given by the dispatcher.
 2. Note any special access requirements, such as four-wheel drive for a muddy field or other extraordinary circumstances.
 3. Do not move the victim until professional emergency responders arrive unless life-threatening conditions exist.

All family members, including children, can play a big role in knowing what to do in a rescue situation. By working together with your local emergency agencies, your neighbors, family members and farm employees, you can assure the best chance of survival and recovery from farm tragedies.

