

Newsletter



A Look Over the Years 2016 - 2022

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Issue #9

Table of Contents

RF-DASH Patches	2
RF-DASH Member Spotlight	2
Farm MAPPER 2.0	3
Spotlight Story: A Look Over the Years	4
Dept. Using Techniques From Ag Rescue Training. 7	
RF-DASH at WEMSA 2023	8
RF-DASH Materials Update.....	9



Get Your Free RF-DASH Patches!

The team is excited to announce the development of official RF-DASH patches for the program. These will be available to all RF-DASH trainers, those you have trained, farmers/ranchers, and anyone that is a champion of the RF-DASH program! If you are interested in obtaining an official RF-DASH patch, please email rfdash@marshfieldresearch.org with your name, how many you would like, and mailing address to



send them to. We are currently limiting requests to 2 per individual. If you are needing more than 2, please provide us with justification. We also have RF-DASH posters still available! If you would like some posters, let us know and we would be happy to send them.

[RF-DASH Firefighter Poster](#)

[RF-DASH Farm Poster](#)

RF-DASH Member Spotlight: Fire Chief Jim Zwaschka

Supporting agricultural communities at multiple levels, Fire Chief Jim Zwaschka of North Mankato Fire Department, has been a champion in his region for agricultural health and safety. Beyond being a Fire Chief, he is a partner of the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center (UMASH), a long time Agribusiness Instructor at South Central College, and long time RF-DASH member.



Jim Zwaschka (left) working with participants on farm safety demonstrations. Photo courtesy of Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center

Chief Zwaschka has never shied away from opportunities to talk to the agricultural community and share his expertise on health and safety in agriculture. In March 2021, Jim and the Upper Midwest Agricultural Safety and Health Center

Farm safety booth presenting on grain bins, PTO safety, and more at Farm City Hub Club in New Ulm, Minnesota, photo courtesy of Chief Zwaschka



(UMASH) attended the Farm City Hub Club in New Ulm, Minnesota presenting on agricultural health and safety information, as well as presenting on various farm safety topics.

In August 2022, Jim had also presented grain handling safety and rescue demonstrations at Minnesota Farmfest.

Over the coming years, Chief Zwaschka will be assisting the RF-DASH program in conducting further research on the dissemination and implementation of the RF-DASH program with agricultural communities.

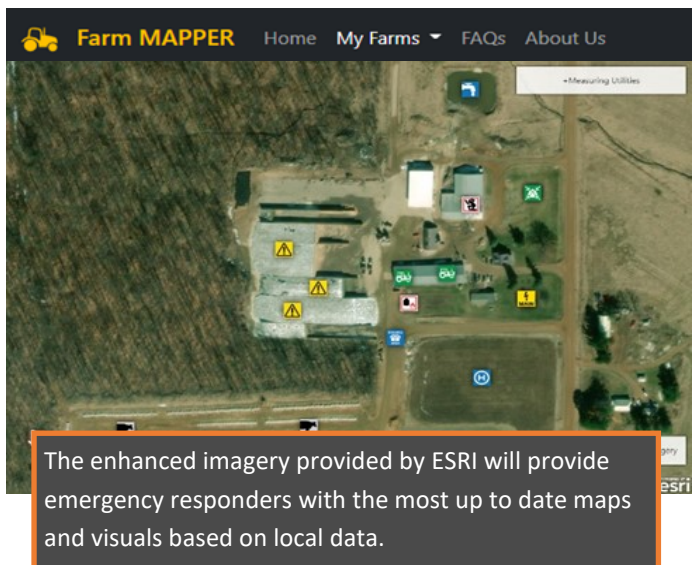
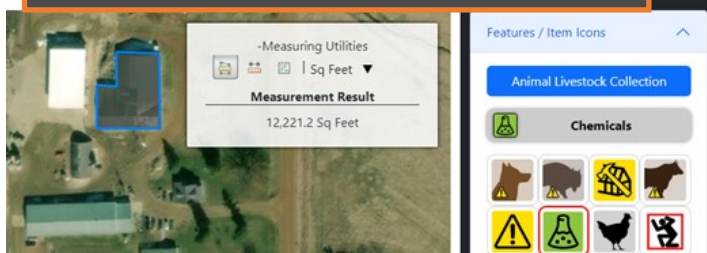
Farm MAPPER 2.0

Farm MAPPER has been a critical component of the RF-DASH program and has been pivotal in equipping emergency responders with the information they need in the event a farm emergency would occur in their community. For the past 6 years, Farm MAPPER has had 8,200 views and 994 registered users, indicating a wide interest in the program. Over the years the RF-DASH team has been receiving feedback and requests for additional features to support their pre-planning efforts. Today, we would like to announce the redevelopment of a brand new updated version of Farm MAPPER is underway.

The features and appearance are still evolving and subject to change, but we are excited to share a brief rundown of the anticipated major forthcoming changes. The new platform is being designed from the ground up and will include a variety of enhancements to better assist users. The most significant upgrade will be conversion to the ESRI map architecture. ESRI brings many benefits for map-related applications including the ability to more easily interface with external datasets (e.g., county lines, natural gas lines, water sources) as well as upgraded aerial imagery from additional state and county sources. A new feature will be incorporated to allow one-click toggling between ESRI/Garmin and Maxar/Microsoft map sources to ensure the highest quality imagery can be acquired for all locations.

The marker icons are being revamped to support easier organization and maintenance. Categories will now exist to group similar icon sets, easily selectable from a fly-out menu. For example, there will be an "Animal/Livestock" collection that will contain all animal-related signage. Additional icons and collections will be created, including for building

The new Farm MAPPER tool will allow users to measure the total square feet of a building on a farm.



letters/numbers to accommodate a more complete set of identifiers. All icons will now include a captioned definition when you hover over them, for simplified understanding of their meaning. Care is being made to ensure additional icons and categories can be added in the future with minimal development effort. A new tool panel will be provided with measuring utilities for quickly determining the square footage of a building or distance from one point to another or along a particular route. There will be more immediate access to Farm Details directly within the map view itself. These details will provide further information for first responders to assist them in a emergency on the farm. Further, multiple defined farms will now be accessible from a convenient dropdown menu so the user can quickly jump to any of their maps from a single page.

The RF-DASH team will provide updates over the coming months as the tool's development progresses for its release in 2023.



By Matt Pilz, Senior Software Engineer at
National Farm Medicine Center

Spotlight Story

RF-DASH: A Look Over The Years

RF-DASH 6 Years Strong

RF-DASH was first developed from the question, “what influential people around farmers can be targets of agricultural health and safety interventions?” This led to the development of the RF-DASH program, which has trained thus far 75 trainers in 10 states and five provinces in Canada. Today, we are happy to announce that the RF-DASH program has been funded for an additional five years! We will continue to build upon the program and increase its reach to a larger national audience.

As we close one chapter and begin another, we would like to reflect on the success of the last six years within the RF-DASH program.

RF-DASH Trainings

Since 2016, the RF-DASH Master Trainers have conducted 6 trainings. In turn, those trained have gone out and trained countless more within their communities and regions.

Wausau, WI (2017)

The initial training started in late November during a snowstorm, hindering the ability for many of its registered participants to attend. Despite the blizzard and hazardous road conditions, all 12 attendees were present at the RF-DASH training. This response demonstrated to the RF-DASH team that there was a significant interest by fire departments to equip themselves with the tools and knowledge to prevent injuries and fatalities on farms.

Menomonie, WI

The second training brought an enthusiastic group of 11 fire departments from both Wisconsin and Minnesota. After attending the training, one of the departments, River Falls Fire Department, created their own version of the RF-DASH program called [Safety in Agriculture and Farming with Emergency Responders \(S.A.F.E.R.\)](#). Many trainees that attended, continue to innovate and serve as strong advocates for the program today.



Elbridge, NY

The RF-DASH team was contacted by members of the Elbridge, New York, Fire Department after they had responded to a fatal farm incident that involved a farmer falling into a hay baler. Responding to this incident pushed the department to pursue trainings on preventing agricultural emergencies. Coming across RF-DASH during their search, they requested the RF-DASH Master Trainers to come to New York and train 14 members from their own and neighboring departments within the region in RF-DASH. This ignited the idea that the program could spread beyond its Midwest borders and be adopted by fire/EMS departments nationwide.

National Training Pilot- Minneapolis, MN (2019)

We reached out to three National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) committee members in the Midwest on whether the RF-DASH program could be incorporated into existing NFPA standards for rural fire/EMS departments. We received positive feedback and pursued a national training pilot to evaluate if the project was generalizable to other regions. The training consisted of 18 individuals from nine states across the U.S., partnered with their regions agriculture health and safety professionals.

RF-DASH trainee's in Elbridge, NY, conducting the on farm training component of program in 2018.





RF-DASH National trainees from 9 states conducting the on farm training component of program at local farm in Minnesota.

Many of the partnerships established through the training have continued and they have begun taking steps to disseminate and implement RF-DASH in their regions. Trainers have obtained separate funding to support their efforts, attending conferences and presenting the RF-DASH program, as well as performing trainings and demonstrations to fire/EMS.

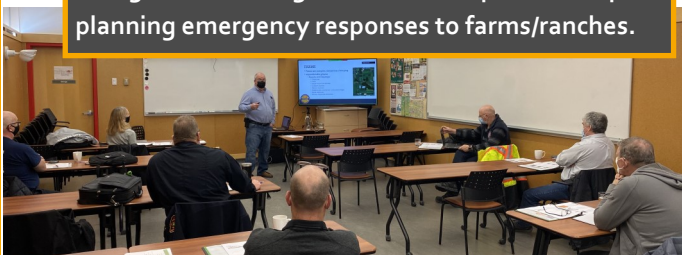
Wisconsin Dells, WI (2019)

The Wisconsin EMS Association, one of the largest EMS conferences in the country, requested a RF-DASH training be held at their annual conference in 2019. A group of 11 firefighters and EMS personnel were trained on the increased risks in agriculture and how they could become safety advocates for their community by preparing to safely respond to farm emergencies. Less than a week later, Stratford, WI Fire Chief, Tim Carey, who had attended the training, responded to a fatal farm incident between a milk truck and a tractor. He effectively communicated with the local media about actions both farmers and the community could take to prevent an incident like this from re-occurring.

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada (2022)

[The Canadian Agriculture Safety Association \(CASA\)](#) requested the RF-DASH team to come to Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada to train their group of Master

CASA safety professionals and Canadian firefighters listening to Chief Minor present on pre-planning emergency responses to farms/ranches.



Trainers within the RF-DASH program. The group consisted of Fire Chiefs, Training Officers, and Agricultural Safety and Health Specialists from departments in Manitoba, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Quebec, and Ontario. In total, the CASA Master Trainers brought over 180 years of their own rural firefighting experience to the proceedings.

The training took place in Winnipeg, Manitoba covering various forms of agriculture ranging from dairy, beef, swine, and crop management. The group ran through the five modules of RF-DASH and discussed the implementation of the program model within their communities.

Next Five Years

Over the next five years, the RF-DASH team will be assessing the dissemination and implementation of the RF-DASH program among farmers and emergency responders. 15 designated RF-DASH sites (5 sites in the Midwest, 5 sites in other regions within the US, and 5 sites in Canada) will be enrolling 5 farms each into the program. Through a series of interviews, the RF-DASH team will be monitoring how trainees and their departments, as well as the farmers enrolled into the program, continue to implement the program components.

The RF-DASH team will continue to focus on supporting future sustainability of the program through more formal alignments with federal standards like those of NFPA and FEMA. The program is also exploring methods to enhance RF-DASH trainings to both current and new trainers by developing training programs with 360 virtual technology. This will enhance the reach of the program and meet the increased requests for additional trainings around the US and Canada.



By Kyle Koshalek, Project Manager at the National Farm Medicine Center

Fire Department Utilizes Techniques Learned From Agriculture Rescue Training

Travis Serocki, chief of the Owen-Withee-Curtiss Fire & EMS District, definitely recommends emergency responders working in rural communities attend the Agricultural Rescue Training Scene Management program in Marshfield, Wisconsin.

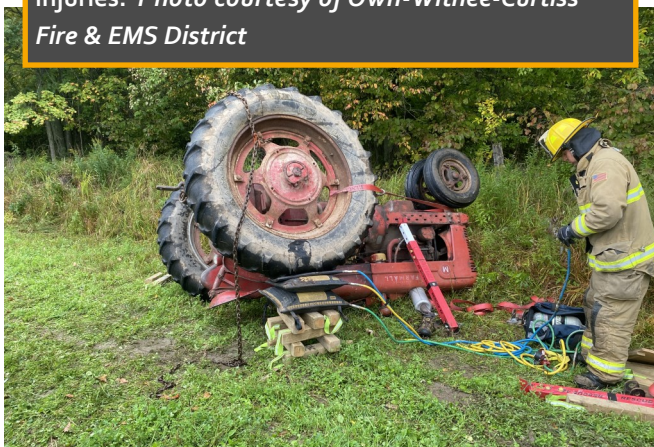
Last month, Serocki's department responded to a tractor overturn. They used techniques learned at last year's Agricultural Rescue Training to quickly lift the tractor off the farmer, who was discharged from the hospital later that day with no more than bumps and bruises, according to Serocki.

"We used Rescue 42s to stabilize, cribbing and airbags to lift the tractor, and had Jaws of Life in case we needed to cut the seat," Serocki said. "Another two inches and the seat would have pinched him to the point where he couldn't have breathed. He was very lucky."

If the old saying is true, that "you make your own luck," then firefighters, emergency medical technicians and rescue personnel will want to register for the training.

"It is very gratifying to hear feedback like that," said Pittsville Fire Chief Jerry Minor, lead instructor for Agricultural Rescue Training. "It makes it all worth it."

Owen-Withee-Curtiss Fire & EMS District quickly lifted the tractor off of a farmer who was discharged later the same day with minimal injuries. *Photo courtesy of Owen-Withee-Curtiss Fire & EMS District*



Farmall M hit a stump in tall grass, resulting in tractor rollover incident. *Photo courtesy of Owen-Withee-Curtiss Fire & EMS District*

In two years, the Agriculture Rescue Training has equipped 143 emergency responders from 54 departments throughout Wisconsin with the tools and knowledge to safely rescue someone involved in a farm emergency. The training covers five workshops: tractor rollover, equipment extrication, grain bin rescue, silo rescue, and farm familiarization. The training also includes presentations that dive deeper into prevention, patient stabilization, farm hazards, livestock safety, and more.

New this year, the Agriculture Rescue Training provided a train-the-trainer course for 17 first responders on the logistics and organization to conduct their very own training in their regions. Similar trainings are being organized next year by Cambria Fire Department, Northeast Wisconsin Trauma Council and UW Green Bay, as well as at the third annual training hosted by the National Farm Medicine Center and Pittsville Fire Company in Marshfield, WI.

For more information on how your department can be better prepared for a farm emergency in your service area, visit agrescue.org.



By Scott Heiberger, MS, Communications Manager at National Farm Medicine Center

RF-DASH at WEMSA 2023

The RF-DASH program had conducted a training at WEMSA in 2019, equipping 11 fire/EMS with the tools and knowledge of the program. After a short hiatus, RF-DASH was among many agricultural programs and organizations invited to participate at WEMSA once again, sharing the importance of agricultural health and safety with students and fire/EMS.

In place of a key note speaker, 20 booths consisting of various agricultural health and safety topics such as Safer Farm, Farm MAPPER, Media Guidelines, Agriculture Youth Work Guidelines, Agritourism, Emergency Response Planning, Grain Entrapment and PTO safety, and many more were in attendance. Three demonstrations were also on display showing how to safely rescue someone from a grain bin, Planning Emergency Livestock Transport Responses

training (PELTR), and ATV rollover safety.

In total, 50 students and over 300 fire/EMS attended the session. Dr. Bendixsen, Director of the National Farm Medicine Center, gave a short presentation on the importance of mitigating agricultural injuries and fatalities on farms and ranches. Dr. Bendixsen stated, "There was a lot of enthusiasm and passion among the fire/EMS community. It was great to see so many individuals wanting to learn more about what they can do to improve the health and safety and mitigate risks within their rural and agricultural communities."

We would like to thank Marsha Salzwedel from the National Farm Medicine Center, Alan DeYoung from WEMSA, and all of the individuals and organizations that helped to organize and put on a tremendous showing at WEMSA.



Bill Halfman and Sandy Stuttgen from UW Extension were at WEMSA promoting their Planning Emergency Livestock Transport Response (PELTR) training. - Photo courtesy of UW Extension



By Kyle Koshalek, Project Manager at the National Farm Medicine Center



Dr. Casper Bendixsen, Director of the National Farm Medicine Center, presenting on the importance of rural and agricultural health and safety.



Pittsville Fire Company Fire Chief, Jerry Minor, talking with local media on grain bin rescue and grain safety.

RF-DASH Materials Update

This page will announce any updates/revisions or new releases for materials and tools within the RF-DASH program.

NEW

1. [RF-DASH Canada One Pager](#): Program flyer co-developed with the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) for RF-DASH Canada. Features introductory information to the RF-DASH Canada program for Fire/EMS and farmers.

Updates

1. [RF-DASH Program One Pager](#): Previously was the RF-DASH Success Story. Includes updates reflecting most current successes in the program. Also features changes in design and information provided.



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