

Partnering with Media to Prevent Injuries in Agriculture

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RURAL FIREFIGHTERS DELIVERING AGRICULTURE SAFETY & HEALTH

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How We Receive News

- Think local
- Social media amplifies “word-of-mouth”
- Traditional media layers and reinforces your messages






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The Media Landscape

- **Newspapers**
 - Check out local community weekly papers
 - Agriculture weekly newspapers
 - *Country Today*
 - *Wisconsin State Farmer*
 - *Agri-View*
- **Television**
 - More likely to encounter TV reporter at a scene than radio or print
- **Radio**
 - Farm broadcasters
 - Highly respected in rural communities
 - Listeners see them as trusted friends

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Spokesperson (PIO) and Media Relations Plan

- **Communication goals**
 - Building trust with community and local media
 - Motivating and influencing safety behavior in community
 - Setting stage for future safety messaging
 - Promoting fundraisers for new equipment
- **Spokesperson**
 - Embodies a departments identity
 - Personifies response efforts
 - Human connection to the public
- **Successful spokesperson = fewer incidents of illness, injury, and death in community**




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Spokesperson and Media Relations Plan

- **Spokesperson responsibilities**
 - Establish relationships with local media agencies before an incident
 - Keeping reporters out of harm's way on scene, yet facilitating their coverage
 - Provide reasonable timeframe for updates
 - Understand journalism deadlines
- **Remember three B's!**
 - Be credible
 - Be available
 - Be helpful






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Preparing for Interviews

<p>Scheduled</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask reporter if they have an angle in mind • Do your homework • Questions in advance? • What do you want to accomplish? • Recorded or live? • Don't be afraid to say you don't know and you will get back to them • RELAX! 	<p>On-Scene</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always assume you are being recorded • Don't speculate! • Include prevention message • Don't say "no comment" • Avoid terms like "it was a freak accident"
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Additional Media Interview Tips

- Don't use firefighter jargon
- Don't argue with a reporter
- Don't play favorites
- Treat reporters with respect
- Know a reporter's deadlines
- Don't be intimidated
- Monitor news coverage following interview to ensure accuracy
- Special TV tips:
 - a) dress the part, look professional
 - b) no sunglasses
 - c) no smoking or chewing



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Power of Stories

- Stories are powerful and can influence behavior
- Incidents provide “teachable moments”
- Consider issuing a press release/incident report
 - Incident location
 - Time called
 - What responders found
 - Actions taken
 - Final results
 - Safety tip/prevention message and action step



Photo courtesy of Southeast Ohio Health System



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Power of Stories

Tractor rollover, September 2022, near Owen, WI.

NFMC worked with Owen-Withee-Curtiss Fire & EMS to develop Facebook post.

Resulted in 32 shares, 47 likes, positive visibility in community.

National Farm Medicine Center
16:48

This tractor rollover occurred in September near Owen, Wis., when the Farmall M hit a stump in tall grass. The Owen-Withee-Curtiss Fire & EMS District, using techniques learned at last year's Agricultural Rescue training event, quickly lifted the tractor off the farmer who was discharged from the hospital later the same day with no more than bumps and bruises, according to Owen Chief Travis Senock. Senock said his department will be sending personnel again this year to the ... See more



Lenora Mueller
Great job, and any training is worthwhile. In this profession we are constantly learning. Thank you for sharing. Glad to hear the farmer's outcome was a positive one.
Like Reply 42



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Putting it All Together: “Tractor vs. milk truck crash ...”

- Nov. 14, 2019 at Wisconsin EMS Association meetings, training given on agricultural risks and how to be safety advocates. Stratford Chief Tim Carey attends.
- November 18, 2019, Stratford Fire (with mutual aid from Mosinee and Marshfield Ambulance) responded to fatal tractor/milk truck crash.
- Chief Carey puts training to use, communicating with local media about actions that farmers and the community can take to prevent such incidents.



Fire Chief, Tim Carey, talking with News Channel 7 about the incident and his message on how it can be prevented courtesy of WFSH.com.



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Safe Depictions

- What we write, say, and images shown can promote unsafe farm practices
- [Media Guidelines for Agricultural Safety](#)
 - List of do's and don'ts for keeping folks safe and showing dangerous farm practices



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Media Relations Resources

- [PIO 101: The basics of media relations for the fire service \(Firehouse\)](#)
- [PIO 101: Tips for media interviews \(Firehouse\)](#)
- [The Media's Role in a Crisis, Disaster, or Emergency \(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention\)](#)
- [Media guidelines for agricultural safety \(Childhood Agricultural Safety Network\)](#)



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Questions?

- Connect with us!
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