



Rural residents are finding that 911 emergency call systems are saving lives.



Photo: Kim Allen

The expense of adding a rollover protective structure is worth a life.



If you employ Spanish-speaking migrant workers, get safety pamphlets written in Spanish.

For Safety's Sake

Get 911—Here's How

It's easy to get a simple 911 emergency call system for a community, says Gary Neff of Mount Sterling, Ohio. Last year, when he was fire chief, he spearheaded a small group of citizens who decided that the 911 emergency number was needed for their county.

Within two months—and with no increased taxes to county residents—911 calls were coming into the police department.

The local telephone company charged only \$1,700 for engineering and equipment expenses for the basic 911 system. The Chamber of Commerce agreed to foot the bill.

Residents of the county recently voted to expand the year-old service to the Enhanced 911 system.

With the new system, 911 calls will go to a computer operator at the sheriff's office. This person then will route calls to the appropriate emergency service—police, fire, or ambulance—that is also connected to the computer system.

"Just by dialing from a certain phone, the computer can tell who's calling, where they're located, and even give medical information about the residents," says Neff.

Paying for the Enhanced 911 system requires a county vote, Neff points out. Rural residents in the service area will be charged a few cents a month on their phone bill to help pay for computer use.

For information about installing either 911 system, talk with local representatives of all telephone companies in the planned service area. Costs can vary for each community.

Save a Life: Have a ROPS Installed

"I strongly believe if the tractor had had a roll bar, my husband might still be alive today," says Sue Ann Taylor of Newbern, Tenn. Her husband, Ronnie, was killed when his tractor turned over.

"I've got two young children who are without a father now. For probably \$500 to \$700, we could have saved his life."

The cost of installing a rollover protective structure (ROPS) varies. But Sue Ann's sentiments are definitely on target.

"About five years ago, the American Society of Agricultural Engineers changed their standard to say that ROPS shall be provided on wheeled agricultural tractors," says John Crowley of the Equipment Manufacturers Institute.

The majority of tractors produced during the past five years have ROPS. The structures are designed to protect a zone surrounding the operator if the tractor rolls over.

But what about older tractors?

Almost all tractors built since 1970, and some earlier than that, can be equipped with a rollover protective structure.

"Each farmer has to check with his dealer to find out if his particular model of tractor can be fitted with a ROPS," Crowley says.

Rollover protective structures are manufactured with materials engineered to withstand the stresses and strains of a rollover, he adds. And dealers are trained to install the equipment on older tractors.

"You're playing Russian roulette

when you jury-rig a pipe contraption yourself," Crowley warns farmers.

If the cost of ROPS causes you to put off installing one, consider the lesson one farmer learned after he watched a rollover demonstration.

"It's a lot cheaper to put rollover protective structures on my tractors than it is to buy coffins for my sons," he decided.

Avoiding Tractor Rollovers and Injuries

- Wear your seatbelt if the tractor has a ROPS.
- Slow down when turning, crossing slopes, and riding on rough, slick, or muddy surfaces.
- Do not permit anyone else to ride with you.
- Hitch attachments only to the drawbar and hitch points recommended by tractor manufacturers.
- When the tractor is stopped, set the brakes securely and use park lock, if it's available.

Say Safety in Spanish

Do you have workers on your farm that read only Spanish? You may prevent an accident by ordering free information that's written in Spanish on chemical handling and farm equipment hazards from your local Extension office; Texas A&M University, Department of Agricultural Communication, College Station, TX 77843-2112, phone 409-845-2211; National Migrant Resource Program, 2512 South I.H. 35, Suite 220, Austin, TX 78704, phone 1-800-531-5120; National Agricultural Chemicals Association, 1155 15th St. N.W., Suite 900, Washington, DC 20005.