

Kansas Corn Commission Encourages Grain Bin Safety

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As farmers from across the state harvest corn and sorghum fields this season, the Kansas Corn Commission is encouraging producers to be safe. A video from the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) and the National Grain and Feed Foundation (NGFF) is helping make a statement about farm safety around grain bins.

The Kansas Corn Commission (KCC) encourages grain producers to take a moment to watch the video (ncga.com/videos/?vid=EaZIS-GZolA&cid) as an important reminder about grain bin safety. NCGA and NGFF teamed up to develop the video in response to an increase in U.S. fatalities and injuries associated with entry into grain bins.

"Protect yourself and your family," KCC Chairman Mike Brzon, a farmer from Courtland, Kan., said. "Entrapment can mean death. Don't enter a grain bin alone for one thing but if you must, take necessary precautions. We can all do better to create an ethic and attitude of safety. We can't afford to disregard it for a second."

The video, shot on location in several states, provides a wide range of information from prevention tips and background data on grain bin accidents. The project also features interviews with professionals in the fields of grain bin safety research and rescue to provide as much information to viewers as possible

In November, the Wichita Eagle reported grain suffocation deaths last year reached an all-time high of, totaling 26 fatalities in the U.S. Statistics show 92-percent of victims who become fully engulfed, which can happen in a matter of seconds, do not survive. According to research and extension statistics, more than 200 farmers have died as a result of grain bin suffocation accidents over the past three decades.

Here are a few recommendations for farm owners and employees during this busy season.

- Break up crusted grain from the outside of the bin with a long pole. When using a pole, check to see it doesn't come into contact with electric lines.
- Stay near the outer wall of the bin and keep walking if the grain should start to flow. Get to the bin ladder or safety rope as quickly as possible.
- Grain fines and dust may cause difficulty in breathing. Anyone working in a grain bin, especially for the purpose of cleaning the bin, should wear an appropriate dust filter or filter respirator.
- Stay out of grain bins, wagons and grain trucks when unloading equipment is running.
- If it is necessary to enter the bin, remember to shut off the power to augers and fans. It is a good idea to lock out any unloading equipment before you enter a bin to prevent someone from unintentionally starting the equipment while you are in the bin.
- Where possible, ladders should be installed inside grain bins to for an emergency exit. Ladders are easier to locate inside a dusty bin if there are brightly painted stripes just above or behind the ladder.

For more information, go to ksgrains.com.