

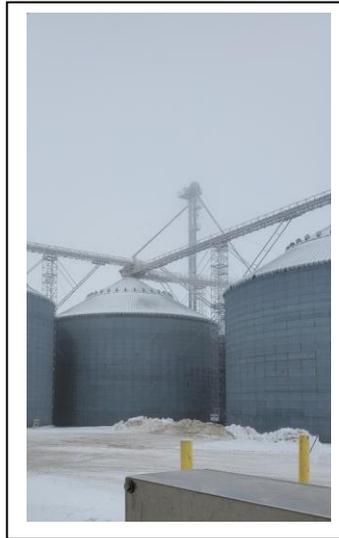


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GETTING A DO-OVER

Every once in a while, in life we are lucky enough to get a do-over. One of those times is when we have a near miss. A “near miss” is an unplanned event that did not result in injury, illness, or damage but had the potential to do so. What does this mean to you? It means that a serious incident almost occurred. How many times have you shrugged off a near miss? Maybe you never even gave it a second thought? Next time think twice. The difference between a near miss and an injury is often a fraction of a second, or an inch or two in one direction or another. And when it happens again, that difference may not be there.



Statistics show that for every 600 near misses, there are 30 incidents that result in damage to property or minor injury, 10 serious injuries and 1 fatality. What that means is the more risks you take, the greater likelihood of a serious injury, or worse. It also means that there were over 600 missed opportunities to prevent a major accident.

So why do we not take advantage of the “do-over” and learn the lessons that a near miss provides? It’s human nature that keeps us from acknowledging what happened and taking steps to prevent it in the future. People don’t want to be blamed for problems or mistakes. People don’t want to create more work for themselves. The biggest reason near misses go unreported and not corrected is people don’t want to look like the “whiner” or be “that guy”. By not reporting and ignoring near misses, you miss out on a huge opportunity to potentially save a life.

Use the “What If” strategy, the next time you have a near miss. Ask yourself, “What if...?” What if that object I dropped had hit my toes? What if I had tripped over the cord and fallen? What if that minor shock wasn’t a minor shock after all? The few minutes spent reporting, investigating, and correcting near miss incidents means less people getting hurt which in turn results in enjoying more time with your families and friends.

BREATHE EASY

Farming is filled with respiratory hazards such as dust and mold spores in grain bins. Exposure to these hazards could result in costly medical treatment, permanent lung damage, or even death. Prevention of the hazard is the best way to avoid injury. Reduce hazards by optimizing use of bin ventilation systems and always monitor the condition and moisture level of grain in the bins. Periodically inspect bin fans to make sure they are in good working order.

In many cases, an inexpensive dust mask could prevent such injuries. A dust mask with a N95 rating is proven 99% effective in preventing dust particles and mold spores from entering your lungs when used correctly. To put on a dust mask correctly, first hold the mask under your chin with the nose piece facing outwards. Pull the lower head strap around the neck and below the ears while holding the dust mask snugly to your face. Place the upper strap over the crown of your head and over your ears. Mold the nose piece over your nose and cheeks to ensure optimal fit. Dust masks should fit snugly and not allow for air escape around your face.

This special edition Stand Up 4 Grain Safety bulletin is a publication by Maplehurst Farms and Fehr-Graham. Suggestions for content are welcome. Please send all questions or suggestions to safety@maplehurstfarms.com