

# Important Tips to Avoid Accidents

Editor's note: Our Tailgate Training Tip Sheets are available in Spanish at [gemplers.com](http://gemplers.com).

## Key Points:

- Serious accidents can happen in a split second.
- It's risky to think that an accident can only happen to someone else.
- Rushing to get the job done is one common reason why accidents occur.

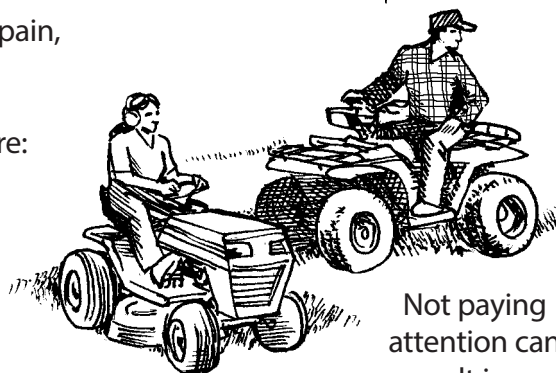
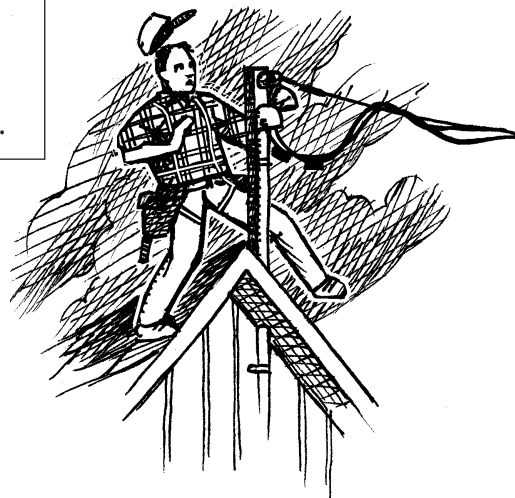
**Note to trainer:** Follow this script or use it to help guide you through a 10- to 15-minute tailgate training session for your ag/hort workers. You may photocopy this sheet for your employees' personal use. However, it may not be published or sold.

## Why do accidents occur?

- Accidents can happen in a split second, and can result in serious injury or death.
- Getting into an accident can also result in long term physical pain, emotional pain, reduced income, high medical bills, and the inability to perform your job.
- There are many reasons why accidents occur. Among them are:
  - carelessness, and not paying attention to the task at hand
  - recklessness
  - taking shortcuts because you're rushing to get the job done
  - being distracted – having your mind on other things
  - not getting enough sleep or taking adequate breaks
  - having an attitude that you've "always done it this way" or that accidents can "only happen to someone else"
  - not being adequately trained
  - stubbornness, including an unwillingness to ask for help
  - letting stress or other emotions interfere with your job
  - not using common sense
  - not thinking about safety all the time

## Rushing to get the job done

- Being in too much of a hurry is a common reason why accidents occur.
- It's important that you take a few minutes before you begin a task to think about the potential hazards and how you can protect yourself.
- Then, tackle the task slowly and deliberately – the quality of your work will be better, and you'll get more done than if you suddenly wind up injured.



Not paying attention can result in an accident.



Being in too much of a hurry to get the job done can lead to an accident.

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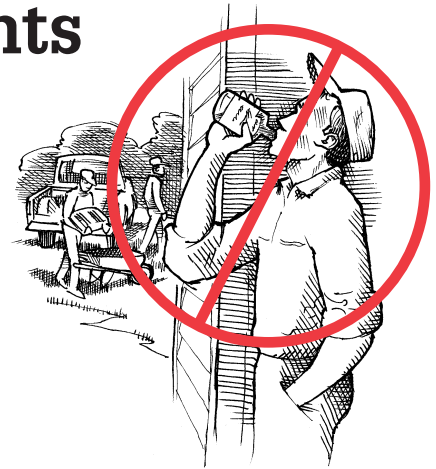
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# Important Tips to Avoid Accidents

## Stress can lead to accidents

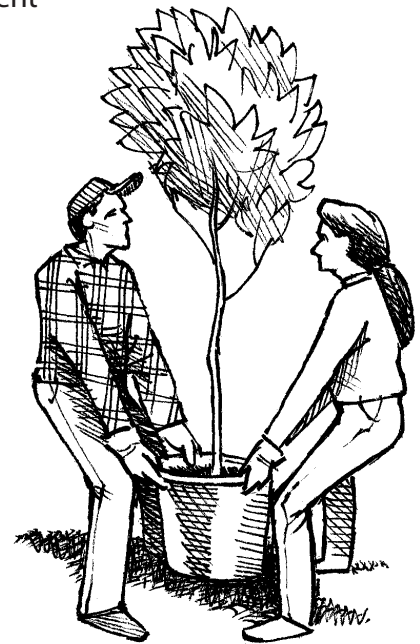
- Accidents are also more likely to occur when you're under stress, whether it's due to problems at home, a death in the family, financial troubles, or other reasons.
- Stress is how your body reacts when increased demands are placed on it.
- Here are a few tips to help you avoid stress:
  - Make sure you have "balance" in your life. Don't work all the time – take some time away from work to have fun.
  - Learn to say "no." Don't take on more than you can handle.
  - Be willing to ask for help when you need it, and to tell your supervisor when there is something you don't understand.
  - Don't deal with stress by medicating yourself. Drinking alcohol or using drugs can make the situation even worse.



Don't deal with stress by drinking alcohol or using drugs.

## More accident prevention tips

1. Practice safe work habits. Don't operate hazardous machinery or equipment unless you have been properly trained. Pay close attention to our safety warning signs. And don't drive or operate equipment such as tractors or forklifts if you are overtired, ill, are feeling anxious, or if you have been using alcohol or other drugs.
2. Don't engage in horseplay. "Fooling around" on the job puts both you and your co-workers at risk of getting hurt.
3. Be especially careful on the road. Using a cell phone when driving, letting a passenger distract you, or keeping loose items under the seat or on the dashboard that can fall or roll around can lead to an accident.
4. Get enough sleep. This is important because fatigue is a common reason for accidents. Being overtired can result in not hearing important safety instructions and in slowed reaction time.
5. Ask for help when you need it. Don't take the attitude "I can do this all by myself." Times you may need help include when you are lifting heavy pots or other items, or when you come to work feeling a little "under the weather" or overtired.



Always ask for help when you need it.

## Are there any questions?

**Note to trainer:** Take time to answer trainees' questions. Then review the Avoiding Accidents Do's and Don'ts.

### AVOIDING ACCIDENTS DO'S AND DON'TS

#### DO:

- Take time to think about safety before you start each task.
- Pay close attention to safety warning signs and follow all safety instructions.
- Watch out for your co-workers, and work together as a team.

#### DON'T:

- Engage in horseplay or other risky behavior at work.
- Operate hazardous machinery or equipment if you are overtired or ill.
- Forget to take breaks, and to slow down if you begin to feel fatigued.

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