

# Farm accidents epidemic - safety measures needed

Farm accidents in Ontario have reached epidemic proportions, but too many farmers disregard the need for farm safety if it means taking time and effort to keep farms danger-free.

With this two-fisted attack on the urgent need for adequate safety measures in agriculture today, Mr. Norman Bell, President of the Canada Safety Council and of the White Motor Company, gained the full attention of delegates to the 12th Annual Farm Safety Conference held recently at the University of Guelph.

Quoting statistics for 1969, Mr. Bell noted that out of the 11,500 accidental deaths across the country, 200 were caused by dangerous farm machinery alone, while the accidental death rate on the farm is 20 per cent higher than the national average. Four fifths of all farm accidents involve tractors or overturning machinery. The loss of life, the permanent and crippling disabilities, and the economic setbacks caused through farm accidents continue to increase, yet public apathy takes little notice of the problem.

Because increased mechanization brings with it the increased possibility of danger, it is

vital that the farm public start concentrating on protecting their children, who will be the farmers of tomorrow. "Safety as a way of life... must begin with the child," said Mr. Bell.

Mr. Bell stressed that children should be kept away from the farm work area and the equipment at all times. Countering arguments that this would prevent a child from learning how the machines worked, Mr. Bell said that proper driving and mechanics courses would do the job far better, and with safety ensured. Children should not be allowed to sit on moving farm vehicles, especially when these are on the highway. Do not allow children to run under wheels when the tractor or machine is idling in the yard, added Mr. Bell.

Parents should set their children a safety example. Where possible, protective frames, roll bars and seat belts should be installed on equipment and used. At the moment "The sad truth is that public apathy towards safety means that only about one quarter of people having seat belts actually wear them," said Mr. Bell. He added that the extra cost of safety equipment installation should not be allowed to discourage

ownership of such equipment.

Children should be taught the commonsense basics: no smoking while refuelling, no refuelling of a very hot or running engine, the proper support and use of hydraulic equipment, the value of a shield for the Power Take-off.

Over 40 per cent of all accidents take place in the home, said Mr. Bell, and noted that farmers were often far from medical aid when trouble struck. Thus home accidents have to be eliminated and nearly always can be by careful thought. Falls can be avoided by stressing their danger to children.

Children, in fact, must be taught to be concerned about safety. Parents and farmers should concern themselves with teaching their children all the dangers, and how to combat them.

A group of Boy Scouts visiting a police station, stopped to view the pictures of "The Ten Most Wanted Men." One boy pointed to a picture and asked if that really was the photo of the wanted person. The policeman assured him it was. "Then why," asked the boy, "did you not keep him when you took his picture?"

## Naturalists oppose pit decision

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists has come out in strong opposition to the recent proposals for governing gravel pits, that being the final word placed in the hands of the Minister of Mines.

The Naturalists feel that the report is based on a denial of any local control or responsibility to the environment.

According to Gerald McKeating, Executive

Director of the Federation, the group recognizes the present unsatisfactory situation with highly variable bylaws in different townships. However, the Federation feel that while the object of rehabilitation is admirable, it should not be used simply as window dressing to allow exploitation anywhere in the province. The organization takes the

stand that the proposed dictatorial powers of the Minister of Mines can scarcely be expected to make land-use decisions in the interests of the general public of Ontario when his portfolio must favor the mining industry.

Tourist, swimming: "Are you sure there are no crocodiles around here?"

Native: "Absolutely. The sharks scare them all away."

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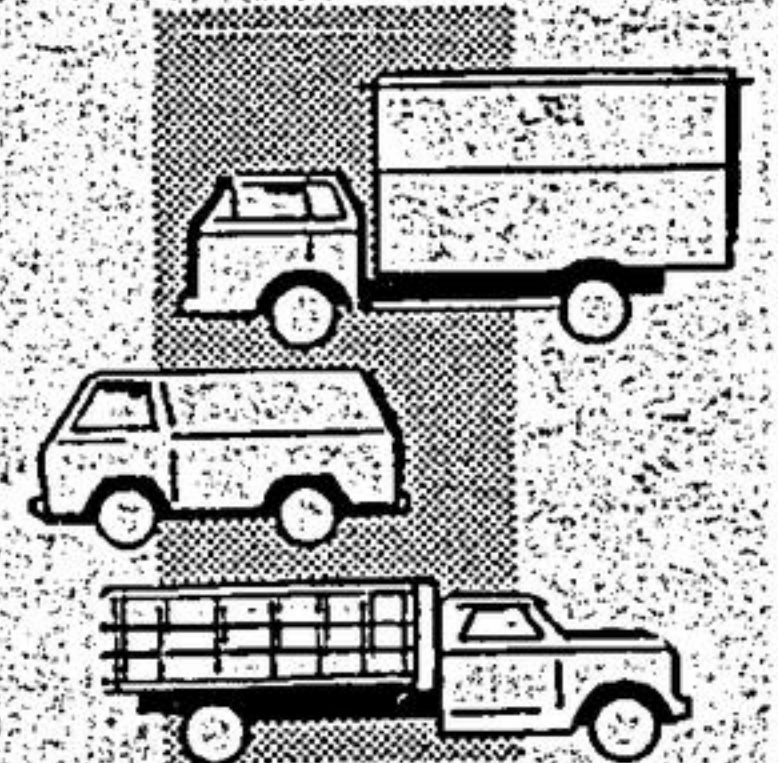
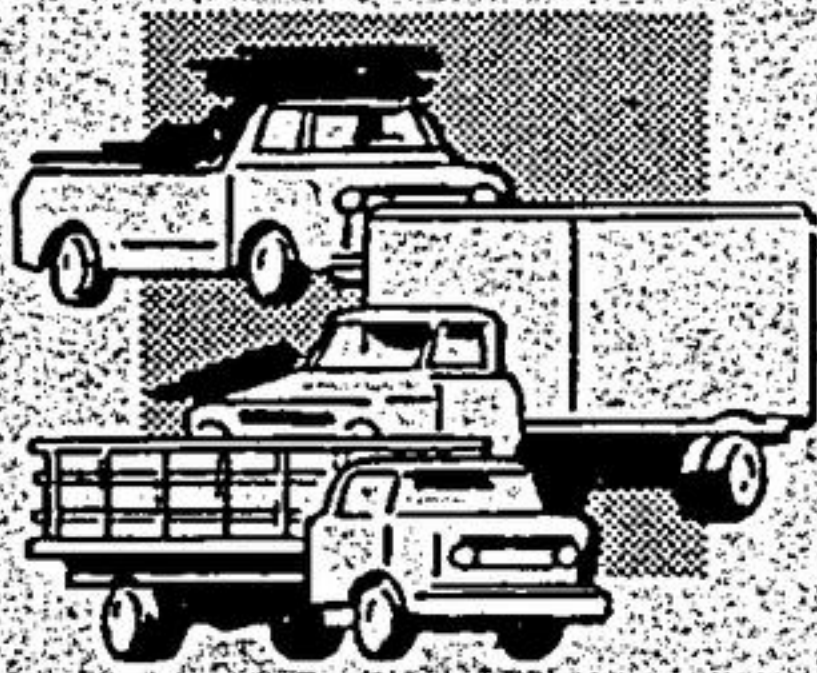
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