

Successes & tragedies involving farm safety

MILLSBORO, Del. — Emergency room nurses have long known it, but now it's official. Agriculture is the most hazardous occupation in the United States, according to the preliminary 1980 Accident Report just released by the National Safety Council.

The grim statistics don't mean, though, that all farmers must resign themselves to the probable loss of a few fingers or toes, and perhaps a bloody death. Some farmers are determined to beat the odds. They're the ones who take safety seriously.

Take Bill Grantham, for example. He's the farm manager of Townsends', Inc. in Millsboro. Grantham has the tough task of managing a crew of 14 people and lots of menacing equipment over a far-flung geographical area. Because of the diversity of the Townsends' operation, crew members are called upon to perform a wide variety of tasks, some of which may be new to them.

Obviously Grantham can't be along to supervise every crew

member who is out operating a combine, splitting wood or handling hazardous chemicals. He does insist, though, that they work in pairs, for safety's sake.

The workers themselves often remind each other to wear personal protective equipment.

Grantham says that by enforcing safety rules and scheduling regular rest periods, Townsends' has managed to avoid serious accidents. The only potentially dangerous incident he could recall was the time a hose full of anhydrous ammonia developed a leak. But thanks to the safety training, the men were wearing gloves and goggles and knew exactly what to do, so there were no serious consequences.

Sometimes it takes a family tragedy to make a person safety conscious. The Warringtons of Laurel have experienced two farm tragedies. A cousin's six-year-old son was killed in a fall off a tractor. And Carol Warrington's father, James Nichols, was severely in-

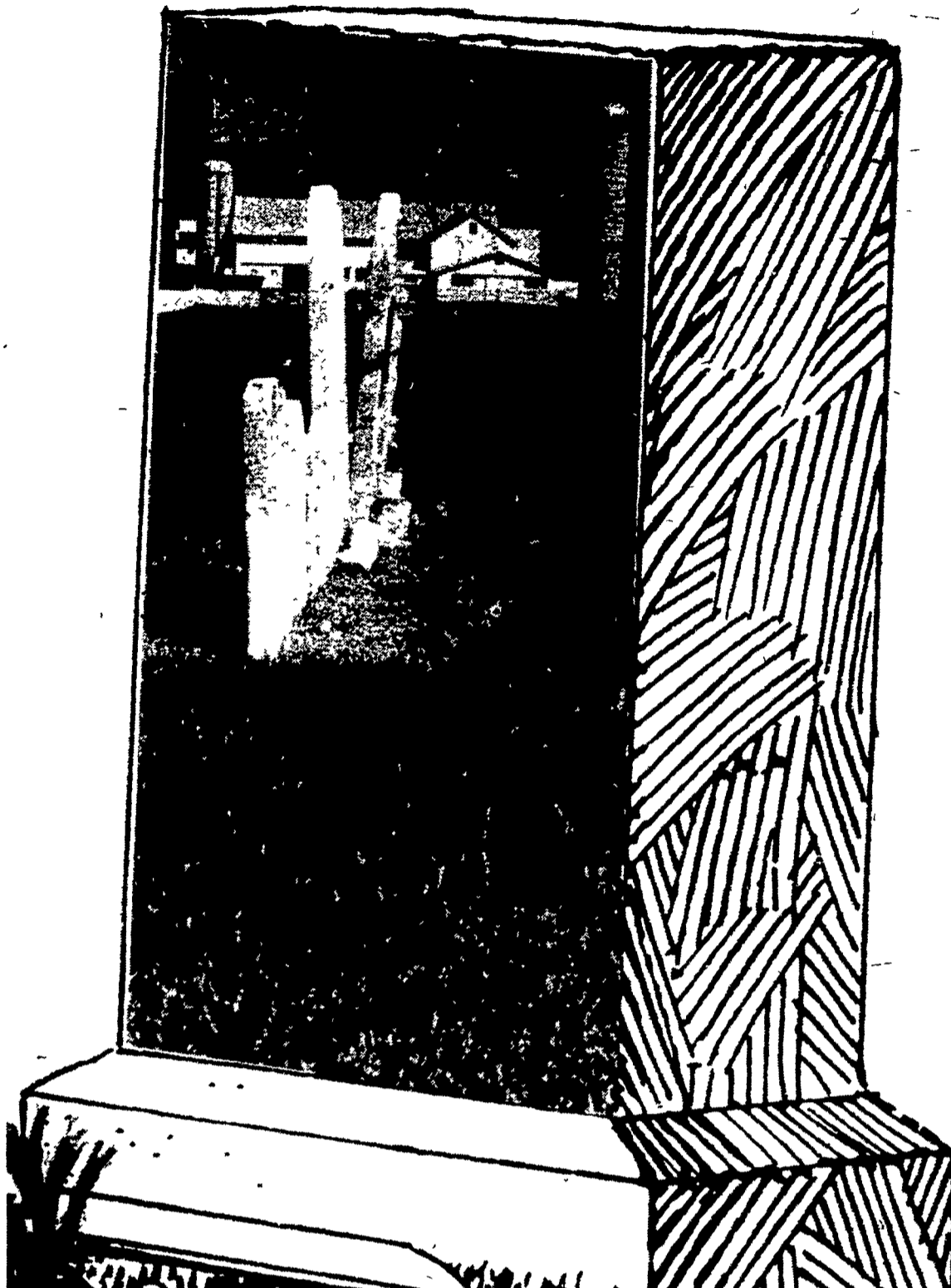
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Signing farm safety proclamation



In recognition of the need for rural safety awareness, Gov. Dick Thornburgh designates July 25-31 as Farm Safety Week in Pennsylvania. Participating in the proclamation signing, along with Secretary of Agriculture, Penrose Hallowell and the Governor are members of the board of directors for the Pennsylvania Agricultural Safety Council (standing, from left to right): Glenn Spangler; Art Smith, Pa. Farm and Power Equipment

Assoc.; John Tacelosky, Department of Agriculture; Shirley Garner, Pa. Farmers Assoc.; Dennis Murphy, Penn State Extension; Linda Boyer, Pa. State Grange; and William Logan, Pa. Rural Electric Assoc. Seated, from left to right, are Penrose Hallowell, Secretary of Agriculture; Gov. Thornburgh and Harold Detwiler, president, Pa. Agricultural Safety Council.



Danger - farmers at work

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lapses of safety concern.

They involve modern, complicated machinery, as well as centuries-old means of farming.

And, livestock with minds of their own can be as dangerous as metal machines operated by key or switch.

"We've been averaging between 50 and 60 farm fatalities annually for the past three or four years,"

Dennis J. Murphy, Penn State Extension safety specialist, said.

That's figures out to better than one farm accident death a week somewhere in the state.

And that means as Pennsylvania farm families observe, along with their counterparts throughout the country, Farm Safety Week beginning today, another farm fatality statistic will be added to the records during the next seven days.

And there will be additional serious injuries and many more accidents causing varying degrees of pain and suffering.

It's been work-related accident statistics like this that have made farming the most dangerous occupation in the U.S. in 1980.

Farming is now even more dangerous than mining and construction.

Your chances of being killed while at work are greater when amidst the wide open spaces of a farm or ranch than when confined miles beneath the earth. Or, fatalities occur more readily when you're at the wheel of a farming vehicle than when you're operating a bulldozer.

In fact, according to the preliminary accident report for 1980 released by the National Safety Council, 2,000 — or more than 15 percent — of the 13,000 deaths from work accidents last year occurred in agriculture.

Farming's work accidental death rate is nearly five times greater than the average for all of industry.

Last year in agriculture, there were 61 deaths per 100,000 farming workers, as compared to an average of 13 deaths per 100,000 workers for all industries.

Thus, while farmers are members of a dwindling minority in many respects, including population and governmental representation, they've become a majority in one area.

And it's one that we can do without.

So, if you wish to remain a member of the agricultural minority, you'd better work better at getting yourself and counterparts out of that majority.

Danger lurks in grain bin

LANCASTER — Small grains are ripening and being harvested and the grain bins are beginning to fill up. Don't let a grain storage or handling accident happen to you or a member of your family.

Discuss with each family member and worker the potential dangers of drowning, suffocation, entanglement, allergic reactions, and the effects they can have on you.

Keep these safety measures in mind when storing and handling grain:

Do not enter a bin when grain is flowing.

Do not enter a bin when you suspect CO₂ is present.

Shut off and secure all power sources before entering a grain bin.

Maintain protective guards on equipment.

Install safety equipment on grain bins.

Wear a dust mask.

Use correct fumigation procedures.

Instruct children and others to stay away from powered equipment.