



SADA IR UPDATE



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October is National Safe Work Month

In South Australia 4.5% of the total workforce works in agriculture; however, almost 19% of workplace deaths occur on farms.

This means South Australian farmers are being fatally injured at a rate of almost 5 times their share of the workforce. On top of the high fatality rate, every week 9 South Australian primary producers are injured seriously enough to access work injury insurance. Frustratingly, many fatalities and serious injuries are preventable.

SafeWork SA is encouraging all South Australians to make health and safety part of their workplace culture.

During October there will be several activities organised by SafeWork SA which can be accessed at [National Safe Work Month](#).

SafeWork's popular [Organise your own workplace activity](#) is on again this October. This year there is a prize pool of \$3,000 to award activities that promote workplace safety.

Employers are encouraged to host a [SafeTea event](#) at their workplace to have important discussions with the employees about health and safety at work.

Employers can register for the [Billion Steps Challenge](#) a free state-wide challenge individually or in a group with your workmates.

You can also register for the free [Incident Simulation](#) an interactive workshop of a critical incident.

SafeWork SA is also in conjunction with the City of Marion and City of Mitcham conducting [Mock Court Trial](#) an interactive mock trial of a critical workplace incident.

SafeWork SA's [schedule of activities](#) planned throughout October that will focus on all areas of Work Health and Safety across key industries in South Australia.

SafeWork SA also has [safety news](#) for farms and the industry specific [Guidebook](#) designed with the assistance of SADA.

Members' Industrial Relations Advice

SADA members are entitled to contact MERS for a free half hour consultation, per member per year. Our telephone number is 08 83312422) and email info@mers.com.au

If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact the SADA Office on 8293 2399 or email sada@sada.asn.au

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**Mediation and Employment
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Hay Safe Day puts spotlight on risks when making hay and silage



This year, SADA is supporting the [Australian Fodder Industry Association](#) (AFIA) and [Safe Ag Systems](#) (SAS) in encouraging producers to check out the practical online safety briefs they have developed that focus on telehandler safety, traffic management plans and worker training.

Their websites also have a link to the new Pro-Visual augmented reality 'Interactive Livestock, Hay & Fodder Industry Guide to Safety 2022/23'.

This was prepared to help farmers recognise and control the key hazards and risks associated with hay and silage production. It is focused on proactive prevention of injury and ill-health and contains essential information to create a workplace safety culture of zero harm.

Data from AgriFutures Australia, collated by AgHealth Australia, [shows there were 46 on-farm deaths nationally in 2021](#). Of these, one was attributed to hay bales, one to a hay baler, one to a telehandler and 10 to tractors. The focus on reducing fatalities and serious injuries in our sector, which is worth about \$2.5 billion annually. National Hay Safe Day is a valuable reminder that safety is non-negotiable, particularly important to think about safety if the window to cut hay is narrowed by the weather and farmers are rushing.

It could be as simple as being aware of surroundings - checking and adjusting knives on balers daily. Always disengage all drives, stuff off the engine and wait until all moving parts have stopped on self propelled forage harvesters.

Other useful tips to stay safe this hay and silage season include baling up good bales, storing hay well, preventing fire, undertaking moisture checks and taking care when stacking, loading and handling hay.

Working with telehandlers

Farmers are increasingly using telehandlers to move and stack hay bales.

But there are some common hazards and solutions when operating these machines.

1. Overturning or tipping. To avoid this, keep the load low and close to the machine to maintain stability. Level the machine using the level indicator before raising any load.
2. Unstable ground. Review your site conditions for soft and/or uneven ground. Stabilisers need to be in contact with a firm, stable surface and ensure the stabiliser indicator lamp is on before using the boom.
3. Always assess the operating environment and keep clear of live cables and overhead power lines.
4. Struck by a telehandler. Be aware of blind spots and any bystanders and install well-placed mirrors and a reversing camera.
5. Struck by falling material. Always carry the load as low as possible without dragging it. Before lifting a load, make sure it is balanced and secure.
6. Poorly maintained machinery and attachments. Perform regular maintenance checks and inspections. Monitor and fix any damage or deterioration to the telehandler and its attachments.
7. Unsafe work procedures. Operators need the correct licenses and training and familiarisation with the machine. High Risk Work Licenses are required when operating a telehandler with a load capacity of three tonnes or more.
8. Attachments appropriately used as work platforms. Telehandlers can be fitted with work platforms, but don't use any makeshift platforms.
9. Use approved attachments only. Use fit-for-purpose attachments and refer to the manufacturer's guide.
10. Unexpected movement. Never start, stop or suddenly change direction at speed.

Training staff

Some of the formal training needed in agricultural businesses includes that for operating forklifts, working in confined spaces, working at heights, safe use and handling of chemicals and first aid.

Talk to SADA if you would like more direction regarding training options.