

Contest Winners Learn How To Save Lives Going Against The Grain

(NAPSA)—High crop yields, low temperatures and wet weather can mean farmers, grain elevator operators and other grain handlers dealing with high-moisture corn and beans are at risk for dangerous, even deadly, grain engulfment—but there are ways to save them and you can help.

Seconds Count

Grain-handling entrapments happen very quickly. Flowing grain is like quicksand and it can draw in a person in seconds.

A grain surface may appear solid, but it is not. A small opening in the unloading gate gives the entire surface the quality of quicksand. When a single kernel is removed from the bottom of a wagon, kernels directly above it rush to fill the void, creating a fluid motion. Flowing grain is like a fluid; objects on the surface sink, and heavy objects sink faster than light ones.

Even if grain has stopped flowing, submerged objects or people are difficult to extract.

The force required to remove someone buried below the surface of grain can easily exceed 2,000 pounds, about the same as lifting a small car.

How To Prevent Entrapments

The easiest way to reduce risk is to eliminate the situation.

- Always lock all access doors to grain storage structures.

- Lock out power to all types of grain-handling equipment. Disconnect power and place locks over operating switches. This also helps discourage grain theft.

- Never enter a bin when grain is caked or spoiled. Grain that is wet or moldy clumps together, and as it is unloaded, a large air pocket may form just below the surface.

- When you must enter a bin, use the buddy system—have a properly equipped second person available and in a place where he or she can see you in the bin and be in constant communication with you. These observers should be able to get more help if necessary and know not to enter the bin to assist themselves.



You can win lifesaving equipment for your favorite fire and rescue department.

Rescue Tubes and Training

Additionally, lives can be saved by first responders who have the specialized rescue training and equipment required to secure someone trapped in a grain bin. Volunteer firefighters are often a rural area's first and only line of defense when a farmer or grain elevator worker becomes helplessly trapped in a grain bin.

The only way to safely remove someone trapped in a bin is to remove the grain around the person's body. And the best way to do that is to arm emergency personnel with the proper tools and training.

The chances of surviving a grain bin engulfment are greatly increased if a rescue tube is available to nearby fire departments. Unfortunately, many fire departments lack the equipment and specialized rescue training needed for a successful rescue.

Rescuers' Contest

That's one reason the National Education Center for Agricultural Safety (NECAS), Grain Systems, Inc., KC Supply Co. and the Nationwide insurance company decided to award fire departments the grain bin rescue tubes and the specialized training that can save lives when farmers and other workers become entrapped in grain bins.

This is where you can help. Any rural community fire department can be nominated before May 31, 2015.

Nominations can be sent in online to www.grainbinsafetyweek.com/participate-with-us/

or by mail to agcontest@nicc.edu; or by mail to NECAS, Grain Bin Safety Ag Contest, 8342 NICC Dr., Peosta, IA 52068.

To get your first responders in the running, describe how the fire department or emergency rescue team and community would benefit from grain entrapment training and a rescue tube. Include your name, occupation, phone number, and mailing and e-mail address, as well as the name, address and phone number of the fire department or emergency rescue team being nominated.

A state-of-the-art grain entrapment simulator and rescue tube will travel to the winning locations for a one-day, six-hour training session. Loaded on a 20-foot trailer and able to hold approximately 100 bushels of grain, the simulator is an excellent training ground.

More information and the official rules are at www.grainbinsafetyweek.com.

Expert Opinion

"Every year, we see people needlessly injured and tragically killed in grain bin accidents that could have been avoided," explains Doug Becker, Director, Nationwide. "It's more important than ever for farm families, rural communities and industry leaders to come together to help prevent these tragic accidents from occurring."

The No. 1 farm insurer in the country, Nationwide is a leading insurer of commercial agribusiness and related businesses in the food, fuel and fiber chain. It's also one of the largest and strongest diversified insurance and financial services organizations in the U.S. It provides a full range of insurance and financial services, including auto, commercial, homeowners and life insurance; public and private sector retirement plans, annuities and mutual funds; banking and mortgages; specialty health; pet, motorcycle and boat.

Learn More

For more information, visit www.grainbinsafetyweek.com.



Note to Editors: Grain Bin Safety Week is February 22 to 28 and the contest runs through May 2015.