

In-Field Repairs

Equipment repairs are often needed in the field, follow the below recommendations to reduce your risk of starting a fire.

- Avoid driving or parking in tall, dry grass since exhaust systems can easily start fires. If you have to park in dry grass patrol the area to make sure a fire hasn't started.
- Be cautious with flame and spark-producing equipment such as metal cutting saws and welding equipment.
- Clear vegetation from your work area; use a field spray rig or pump sprayer to wet down your immediate work area as well as a wider zone around your work area, and re-wet the area periodically if the work takes an extended period of time.
- Know where your closest water resources are located in case a fire breaks out.

Livestock and Fire

While livestock are not normally considered a fire hazard, the environment in which they are placed can contain many fire hazards in the form of tools and equipment.

- Secure heat lamps to a solid object that will not fall into bedding materials if bumped.
- Use non-combustible bedding, such as dry sand instead of straw, when using heat lamps.
- If it is necessary to use extension cords for heat lamps or portable heaters, make sure the wire size is sufficient for the electrical load.
- Keep all electrical wiring out of areas which can be accessed by livestock. Prevent damage to wiring insulation by using conduit to protect the wire from livestock chewing or rubbing.
- Install electric fences properly, with sufficient clearance from combustibles.

In Case of Fire

When a fire is discovered, call 911 immediately or your local dispatch center. Any delay in the arrival of the fire department can be disastrous.

Keep directions to your farm or ranch near the phone to aid visitors or individuals who are not familiar with your area.

Remember

Good housekeeping is good fire prevention. A clean, orderly work place and well-kept equipment and tools are less likely to cause a fire.

Good preventive maintenance not only prolongs equipment life, but also reduces fire hazards.

Fires can grow extremely fast. A small fire can rapidly become a raging wildfire with a gust of wind. If a fire appears to be getting away, call 911 immediately.

By practicing good prevention daily, you can protect your farm or ranch.



Fire Prevention on the Farm and Ranch

Be Aware - Prepare!

For additional information, contact your local fire agency.



Fire hazards are numerous around the farm and ranch. Rural residents must give fire prevention first priority in protecting their homes, families and businesses. Fire prevention on the farm or ranch starts with YOU.



It is important to be aware of the destruction a wildland fire can cause. Crops, livestock, equipment, structures and human life are all at stake when a fire gets out of control.

Machinery Fires

Checking for fire hazards before starting work each day will reduce the chance of costly equipment fires.

- Clean around the engine, exhaust system, belts and chains before every use to minimize crop residue which can easily catch fire.
- Check and fix any damaged exhaust system components.
- Replace any worn or badly frayed drive belts.
- Check and fix any broken or exposed electrical wiring.
- Be aware of any odors of burning electrical wiring.
- Check and fix worn or miss-aligned moving parts, which can indicate a lack of lubricant.
- Low tire pressure or worn tires can result in a blowout and possibly spark a fire if running on exposed rims.
- When pulling trailers, attach safety chains securely; loose chains dragging on pavement cause sparks, igniting road-side fires.

Flammable Liquids

Flammable liquids, such as gasoline, diesel, oils, solvents and cattle dips are frequently used on farms and ranches.

- Flammable liquids should be stored in a designated area away from all sources of heat, such as welders, grinders, heaters, electric motors and hot engines.
- Flammable liquids should be stored in Underwriter Laboratories (UL) - approved containers intended for that use.
- Use flammable liquids in well ventilated areas. Vapors from these liquids can travel great distances to an ignition source.

Safe Fueling

Fires started while fueling equipment and vehicles can be deadly.

- Never refuel equipment with the engine running.
- Allow hot engines to cool 15 minutes before refueling.
- Extinguish all open flames and smoking materials before refueling.
- If fuel spills on an engine, wipe away any excess and allow the fumes to dissipate.

Open Burning

Timing is critical for burning safely and effectively.

- Check local, county or state laws on open burning. Always obtain a permit to burn from the local fire department or issuing agency. Be sure to notify the fire department when you start burning.
- Be aware of the weather conditions and be flexible. If weather conditions are unfavorable or forecast to be unfavorable, postpone the burning to a later date.
- Avoid burning when smoke from your fire might obscure highways or send smoke into downwind residences or communities.
- Be aware of your surroundings and other combustibles. Protect buildings and fences.
- Look up. Watch out for power lines and tree branches.
- Build a fire break to contain a fire in the area to be burned.
- Keep firefighting tools, such as rakes, shovels and garden hoses, close at hand, for small fires. Discs, plows and large sprayers are needed for large fires. Make sure you have plenty of help.
- Never leave a fire unattended.