

Governor Michael R. Pence
Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann
Director Ted A. McKinney

Office of Communications
One North Capitol Avenue, Suite 600 Indianapolis, IN 46204
Phone: (317) 232-8770 · Fax: (317) 232-1362
www.isda.in.gov · communications@isda.in.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 9, 2015

Indiana State Agencies Partner for Road Safety Message ahead of Harvest Season

INDIANAPOLIS - With harvest season starting this week, motorists should expect to see slow-moving farm equipment from Indiana's 58,000+ farms on Hoosier roadways. Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann and the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA), Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS), Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), and Indiana State Police (ISP) are teaming up to bring attention to the need for more safety on Indiana's rural roads.

"While motorists cruise the beautiful rural roadways of Indiana this fall, they should be aware of slow-moving farm equipment using those roads during harvest season," Lt. Governor Ellspermann said. "It is incredibly important to get this message out to ask all drivers to have patience and drive safely around slow-moving vehicles. I encourage all Hoosiers to be mindful and alert for farm equipment on roadways this harvest season."

The following tips will help ensure the safety of motorists, passengers, and operators of slow-moving equipment:

- Farmers on roadways are going to or from work, just like many other people on the road.
- Most farmers will pull over when they are able to let you pass, but it may take time for them to get to a safe place to do so. Be patient.
- Farm equipment is wide, sometimes taking up most of the roadway. Be careful when passing.
- The red triangle on the back of an implement, farm machinery or other vehicle indicates a slow-moving vehicle (under 25 mph).
- If you're driving 55 mph and come upon a tractor that's moving 15 mph, it only takes five seconds to close a gap the length of a football field between you and the tractor.
- Do not try to pass a slow moving vehicle on the left without ensuring that the vehicle is not planning a left turn. It may appear that the driver is pulling over for you to pass when it is actually preparing to turn. You will drive right into its path, endangering yourself and the farmer.
- Do not pass if you are in a designated "No Passing Zone" or within 100 feet of any intersection, railroad grade crossing, bridge, elevation structure, or tunnel.
- Do not assume that a farm vehicle that pulls to the right side of the road is going to turn right or is letting you pass. Due to the size of some farm implements, the farmer must execute wide left-hand turns. If you are unsure, check the operator's hand signals and check the left side of the road for gates, driveways or any place a farm vehicle may turn.

“As our farmers are working to bring in this year’s crop, we want to remind all Hoosiers of farmers’ increased presence on the roadways,” ISDA Director Ted McKinney said. “We want to reinforce to motorists that these farmers have every right to use the roadway, too. Waiting a few minutes to safely pass or for the driver to pull over will not impact their drive substantially, and they will get to their destination unharmed.”

“With slow-moving vehicles during harvest, patience and allowing extra time for travel is crucial,” said Dr. Michael Olinger, state emergency medical services director with IDHS. “Also, it’s critically important to avoid any distractions, such as smart phones. Distracted driving is the biggest cause of vehicular injuries.”

Indiana State Police Supt. Doug Carter said, “To get from the farm field to the dinner table takes cooperation of drivers of both regular vehicles and farm vehicles safely sharing the road as crops are harvested and transported to market.” Supt. Carter continued, “A distraction or lapse in judgment for either driver can have catastrophic consequences, which is why we ask all to be attentive to the full time task of safely driving, be it in a car, truck or a piece of farm equipment.”

“This harvest season drivers should watch for both farm equipment and vehicles waiting to pass to prevent crashes where traffic slows or stops suddenly,” said INDOT Commissioner Brandye Hendrickson. “Drivers also should anticipate large vehicles as they navigate hills and curves on country roads.”

By law, farm equipment must have the nationally designated slow-moving vehicle sign – a red triangle-shaped reflector – to warn oncoming drivers that their equipment is on the road. These vehicles often travel at speeds no higher than 25 mph.

For more information about agriculture safety in Indiana, visit: www.getprepared.in.gov

###

ABOUT ISDA

The [Indiana State Department of Agriculture \(ISDA\)](http://www.in.gov/agriculture) was established as a separate state agency by the Legislature in 2005. The Director of ISDA is appointed by the Governor and is a member of the Governor’s Cabinet. Administratively, ISDA reports to Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann, who also serves as Indiana’s Secretary of Agriculture. Major responsibilities include advocacy for Indiana agriculture at the local, state and federal level, managing soil conservation programs, promoting economic development and agricultural innovation, serving as a regulatory ombudsman for agricultural businesses, and licensing grain firms throughout the state.

Media Contact:

Ben Kenney
317.690.3303
bkenney@isda.in.gov