

## Remote Farm Incidents

### INTRODUCTION

In the agricultural industry, employees are sometimes required to work in remote areas which can create specific safety concerns. It is critical to be prepared to deal with an emergency situation should it arise. Below you will find some simple things you can do to prepare for remote incidents.

### PLANNING

If you plan in advance for remote farm incidents, you will be prepared when an issue arises. Written procedures should be developed for working in remote areas and should be in place whether employees are working together or alone. The following key points should be considered when planning for work in remote areas:

- Develop procedures for checking on employees throughout the work shift. Identify a designated person to check on employee(s) who work remotely and it is especially important if an employee is working alone. Specific times should be established for employees to check in. The “Buddy System” helps to maintain knowledge of employees location.
- Establish effective communication procedures (cell phone, radio, drive by, etc.) and be sure the reception is adequate on all devices.
- A worksite map should be developed indicating where and when employee(s) are working.
- Provide a safety kit for employee(s) working in remote areas.

- Employees who might be working in an area that need to be visible to others; e.g. a hunter, should be provided with protective work wear such as a reflective safety vest or other high visibility clothing.

### SAFE WORK PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

Safe work practices and procedures, along with a plan to control any hazards employees may face, should be established to ensure employees are working safely in remote areas. There are several things to consider when establishing your procedures including:

- Identify potential hazards that may be encountered such as confined spaces, insects, snakes, falls and traffic.
- Ensure an employee working alone in a remote area waits for assistance if a job/task requires two people.
- Work with local authorities to prepare them for the possibility of a remote incident happening on your property or other locations.
  - Consider having a map with landmarks, if possible.
  - Instruct local authorities on any special equipment needed such as 4 wheel drive, extrication equipment, “jaws of life”, etc.
- Practice various “what if” scenarios for remote employee(s) which include special instructions for those scenarios.

## TRAINING

Employees should be trained so they are prepared to handle remote work. Consider the following:

- Train employees on your procedures and get their input when developing your plan.
- Train employees on the hazards and unique situations they may encounter in the area where they will be working.
- Train employees on safe work practices and the controls you have established for working remotely.
- Train all employees on heat illness procedures and ensure first aid/CPR trained employees are on site. They will most likely be the initial responder in an emergency situation that happens in a remote area.

Local authorities may assist in training employees on specific hazards or emergency procedures.

## EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Ensure employees are prepared to work safely and know what to do in an emergency situation. In an emergency, the following should be part of your established procedures:

- In the event of a flood, fire or other disaster, make sure employees are familiar with your evacuation plan for the area where they are working.
- Ensure communication devices have adequate reception.
- Employees should know who to contact in the event of an emergency.

- When calling 911, employees should be instructed to remain calm.
- The caller should provide their name, location (know the closest cross streets), nature of the emergency and where they can be reached.
- Develop procedures to assist escorting emergency responders to injured employees in remote areas by using flags, flashlights or other visual aids.
- Injured employee(s) should not be moved unless there is an imminent danger, otherwise wait for emergency responders.
- For employees working alone it is critical to maintain check up procedures should an emergency arise and an employee can't help themselves.

## EQUIPMENT/MATERIALS

The following is a basic list of supplies to help with your remote work:

- Cell phone/radio
- Map
- Safety cones, flags, flashlights
- Reflective safety vest
- Umbrella
- Emergency food/water
- Emergency numbers (posted at worksite and in vehicles)
- Medical kit
- Eyewash (safety squeeze bottle)

For additional information or assistance, contact your Zenith Safety and Health consultant.

Zenith provides workplace safety resources at: **TheZenith.com**<sup>®</sup> RM135DYFM (v2 6-11) 2