

HAYRIDES

Serious injuries and deaths have occurred during hayrides. Participants have fallen from wagons and been run over by the wagon's wheel, vehicles have struck poorly lit wagons and cars have struck participants walking behind wagons. Excess speeds and loss of control have also caused injuries.

Minimum safety measures should always be maintained and include, but are not limited to the following:

- Provide adequate supervision to prevent horseplay and ensure that no one attempts to get on or off a wagon while it is moving;
- Before the ride, ensure that all participants are fully aware of the safety rules;
- Load and unload the wagon in a well-lit and safe location out of the way of any traffic, and provide assistance as necessary for participants when boarding or offloading;
- Keep all participants away from tow vehicles or horses at all times;
- Avoid the use of public roads, and roads with steep hills and excessive curves. Where a quiet public road must be used, require a follow-up vehicle with warning signage and four-way flashers;
- If possible, mark private roads with low voltage or battery operated lighting in particularly dark areas and to highlight curves. Do not use candles, lanterns or other means that if damaged could cause a fire;
- Before the hayride, inspect private roads for dangerous ruts, rocks or debris and low hanging or dead overhead limbs;
- Provide sideboards and end panels to prevent participants from sliding off or being jolted off if the wagon hits a pothole, rock or other rough spot;
- Ensure all gates and sideboards are properly secured before starting out;
- Insist that riders keep their arms and legs inside the wagon to prevent injury from trees or brush;
- Ensure that occupants remain seated during the ride;
- Provide proper lights at the front and rear of the wagon during night hayrides and at other times when visibility might be in doubt;
- Place reflectors and/or lights along the sides of the wagon;
- Keep the tow vehicle and wagon properly maintained and document all maintenance;
- Ensure that the driver is experienced with the vehicle used (tractor, truck, horses, etc.);
- Allow only the driver on the tow vehicle unless additional seating is provided by the manufacturer;
- Do not exceed a speed of six miles per hour; and
- Provide a means of securely latching the wagon to the tow vehicle.

Hayrides can be fun, but they can also be tragic without adequate attention to safety. Make sure you do your part to ensure a safe ride.