

Be informed, be alert, be aware, be safe around silage!

People are the greatest resource on any operation, and ensuring the safety of farm employees and visitors is the highest priority. It's an unfortunate reality that on-farm deaths often result from a lack of safety awareness and safe practices near silage storage structures.

When everyone knows and understands the silage safety rules, there should be little risk for owners or employees. Instead, producers can focus on the numerous benefits of silage to livestock and farm productivity.

1) KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE

- Never stand closer to the face than three times its height
- Never park vehicles or equipment near the feedout face.
- Never allow people to stand near the feedout face.
- Post warning signs to ensure visitors and bystanders observe this rule

Take care when new season silages, especially in enclosed environments.

2) BRING A BUDDY

- Never work in or near a bunker pile alone
- Wear safety vests while working around silage
- Maintain communication and visibility with a buddy in a safe location when working on, or in, a silage structure.

3) FILL SAFELY

- Do not fill higher than unloading equipment can safely reach.
- Only allow trained and experienced personnel to operate silage equipment.
- Use proper filling techniques
- Be wary of silage gases.

If orange or brown gas is seeping from the silage, this is HIGHLY toxic. Allow it to fully dissipate before approaching the silage.

- Carbon dioxide is colorless but can be very dangerous due to the risk of asphyxia.

4) MAINTAIN CAREFULLY

- Use caution when removing plastic, tires, tire side-walls or gravel bags.
- When working in an over-filled bunker or pile, always wear a harness connected to a safety line

5) INSPECT CAUTIOUSLY

- Do not take core samples if the feedout face is more than eight feet tall.
- Always obtain samples and inspect using a loader bucket.

6) FEEDOUT CORRECTLY

- Never dig the bucket into the bottom of the silage. This can create an overhang.
- Never drive the unloader parallel to, and in close proximity of, the feedout face of an over-filled bunker or pile.

Always pay attention to the surroundings while near a silage storage structure. Safety should be the first priority of everyone on the farm. Refer to the Silage Safety Handbook for a comprehensive guide to silage safety. The handbook is available upon request by visiting www.qualitysilage.com