



## GRAIN BIN SAFETY - SAFELY ENTERING A GRAIN BIN

The grain handling industry is a high hazard industry where workers can be exposed to numerous serious and life threatening hazards. Grain bin entry is extremely dangerous and exposes farmers and commercial grain handlers to serious hazards. Suffocation can occur when workers are engulfed by grain or when bins develop oxygen-deficient atmospheres. To add to the tragedy, when other workers or family members attempt to rescue a person in distress, they too can fall victim. Although bin entry should always be a last resort to accomplish a task, there are times when workers must enter a grain bin. To help ensure worker safety, all farmers and commercial grain handlers should strictly follow OSHA's grain-handling standard and requirements for entering a bin, including developing and implementing a written bin entry program. To educate employers, employees and the public about safety in the grain handling industry, Grain Bin Safety Week is held February 17-23, 2019.

Before any bin-entry activities can occur, OSHA requires workers to be trained for the specific hazardous work operations they are to perform. Workers need to understand the hazards, equipment shut-down and lock-out procedures, air testing and how to properly tie off when entering above grain that can engulf. When a worker enters a grain bin from a level at or above the level of the stored grain, or whenever a worker stands on or in stored grain, the worker must use a harness and safety line that's securely tied to a fixed, overhead-anchor point. A lifeline attached to any location other than an overhead-anchor point is useless in preventing engulfment and may only serve as a means to locating a body.

Workers should be reminded to never walk down grain — a practice strictly prohibited under OSHA's grain handling standard. Walking down grain is when a worker walks on top of grain, while equipment is running, in an effort to make it flow.



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