

Hand-me-down Hazards: Dangers of Used Equipment¹

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The condition of equipment sold at auctions or transferred from person to person varies widely, so it's important to examine used equipment carefully.

When equipment is purchased through a dealership, the purchase usually includes a warranty, directions for maintenance and operation, warning signs, "seals of approval" and assurances that the equipment conforms with voluntary or federal standards.

But regardless of where you buy your equipment, look for items that may detract from safety. They include missing shields and poor upkeep.

A bargain price may not be worth the risks involved. Don't be blinded by a "sale" and end up with equipment for which you didn't bargain.

Ask yourself the following questions when you're buying used equipment.

- Are operating manuals included?
- Are shields and guards in place?

- Is the equipment in decent condition?
Breakdowns due to poor maintenance could cause unsafe working conditions.
- If you're buying a tractor, is it equipped with a ROPS? If it isn't, determine who's responsible for making sure it's installed. Remember, tractors manufactured after October 1976 that are used by employees are required to have ROPS and seat belts per OSHA Standard 1928.51 (Roll-over protective structures (ROPS) for tractors used in agricultural operations).

• *Remember:*



For More Information

In a research article, "A Safety Survey of Auctioned Farm Equipment," authors West and May found that equipment offered for sale at auction often

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lacks important safety equipment. Over an 8-month period, they surveyed 36 of 43 auctions advertised in New York State. Using ASAE standards, they found that over 97% of tractors and over 85% of implements offered for sale had defects, lacking such essential safety equipment as slow-moving vehicle emblems, ROPS, seat belts, lights, PTO master shields, starter solenoid covers, or steering components. (Journal of Agricultural Safety and Health, Vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 246-253.)

For more information about tractor safety, visit the Florida AgSafe Web site:

<<http://www.flagsafe.ufl.edu>>; or the National Agricultural Safety Database (NASD): <www.cdc.gov/nasd>.

This publication is part of the Safer Tractor Operator series. A complete list of publications in this series is given below. All are available at your county Extension office and at the EDIS Web site, <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>>, and at the Florida AgSafe Web site.

- Getting Started on the Right Foot: Dangers of Bypass Starting <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE172>>
- When Two's a Crowd: Dangers of Extra Riders on Tractors <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE173>>
- Filling Gas Cans Safely <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE174>>
- Lighting and Marking Farm Equipment for Road Travel -- Summary of ASAE Standard S279.10 <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE175>>
- Road Safety for Tractors and Farm Machinery <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE176>>
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Rollover Protective Structures (ROPS) <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE177>>
- Avoid The Invisible Hazard: Know About Soil Shear Lines <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE178>>
- Shortcuts are Shortsighted! or Invest Seconds, Save Lives (AE306) <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE179>>
- Ready or Not? Get Ready with a Tractor Operator Checklist <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE180>>
- Yee-Haa! Formula for a Successful Tractor Rodeo <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE181>>
- Hand-me-down Hazards: Dangers of Used Equipment <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE182>>
- Safety Tips for Tractor Loading and Towing <<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/AE183>>
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