Harvest has begun and the pace will pick up quickly so now is a good time to remind your workers and delivering drivers and farmers of procedures to follow when dumping various types of grain vehicles. Common hazards found during harvest/dump pits include:

- Traffic increases.
- Speed of Traffic.
- Long hours.
- Inexperienced and/or reckless drivers.
- Trucks and wagons in bad repair.
- Inexperienced temporary workers.
- Cell phone usage.
- Smoking in and around dump pits.

Each driver/farmer should also be told at the beginning of the harvest season what procedures you want them to follow for each dump pit and vehicle. Please inform employees of the following list of common sense procedures to follow when dumping various types of grain vehicles:

- Never walk in front of vehicles, even if they appear to be out of gear.
- Always make sure the driver sees you before you operate any equipment on the vehicle. (If you cannot see the driver in their mirror, then they cannot see you.)
- Always use consistent hand signals.
- Make intended/expected movements.
- Wear high visibility clothing and appropriate PPE.
- Discourage cell phone use on facility.
- NO SMOKING.

Several years ago a farmer delivered grain to a dump pit at a central Illinois grain elevator with a straight truck and a 400-bushel gravity wagon. After the part-time “harvest employee” dumped the straight truck, the driver of the truck pulled forward before the employee was out of the way of the gravity wagon and the employee was struck and killed. The safety precautions are necessary and can save a life!
Over the years, grain wagons have gotten much bigger while dump pits have not.

It should be determined where the “safe zone” to stand is when large vehicles enter to dump grain and this information should be conveyed to all employees who work in the dump pits.

**Straight Trucks**

- Communicate and stay in visual contact as much as possible.
- Be sure the truck bed is down when opening the end gate.
- Once the end gate is open, step to the left/driver side of the vehicle where you are visible to the driver in their mirror. This will also prevent injuries if there is a “foreign object” in the truck which may fall and hit you.
- Next, have the driver hoist the bed slowly to initiate grain flow into the pit.
- Remain at the side of the vehicle while the grain is unloading.
- Advise your employees also that there can be foreign objects in the grain that could cause serious injury to workers or equipment.
**Tandem Trucks**
- Communicate and stay in visual contact as much as possible.
- When you dump a tandem truck with cargo doors, make sure the truck bed is down.
- Open the small gate to take some of the pressure off the center door.
- Next, open the cargo doors.
- Move to the left/driver side of the truck and have the driver hoist the bed slowly.

**Hopper Bottom Semis**
- Communicate and stay in visual contact as much as possible.
- Dumping hopper-bottom semis involves opening the hopper by turning a wheel on the side of the unit.
- Remember to face the vehicle squarely and to bend your knees in this process.
- This is an individual process that requires the operator to be comfortable when turning the crank/wheel.
Gravity Wagons
• Communicate and stay in visual contact as much as possible.
• Turning flywheels on gravity wagons can easily result in scraped knuckles.
• Be sure to protect your hands by wearing gloves.
• Also, it’s important to stay on the side of the wagon where the grain is coming out. Wagons have been known to tip to the side away from the chute.

Housekeeping
Another important safety concern in the dump pit is housekeeping. In particular, when dumping soybeans, be aware that walking on beans is like walking on little marbles. Get into the habit of quickly sweeping stray beans into the dump pit after each load. Please remind all employees of these common sense procedures. There is a very real risk of serious injury or death while working in grain dump pits. These risks can be greatly reduced with very basic communication and by being aware of your surroundings.

Contact the Wisconsin Agri-Business Association office at (608) 223-1111 if you have any questions about these or any other topics. The last page of this Safety Notice is a sample handout that can be used to inform your customers of basic actions you would like them to take or not take. You can customize the handout to suit your facility.
Dear Valued Customer:

During harvest several years ago, there was a fatal accident near the dump pit at a country elevator. The accident involved a straight truck pulling a gravity wagon. (Refer to pictures below) The employee of the elevator finished dumping the truck and before he could get clear of the vehicle, the driver drove away, forgetting about the wagon he was pulling. As a result, the elevator employee was killed when he was struck by the gravity wagon.

Tragic accidents and near miss accidents can happen in and around grain elevator dump pits if proper safety precautions are not observed. Over the years, various injuries including sprained wrists, shoulder problems, broken noses, and loss of teeth have occurred to grain elevator employees during the harvest seasons. By following the five simple rules listed below, we will all be able to reduce the likelihood of a fatality or injury in or around the grain elevator dump pits this harvest season. Your cooperation in this safety effort is both expected and appreciated.

Dump Pit Safety Rules

Follow these simple steps and procedures so everyone can have a safe and productive harvest:
1. Shift your vehicle into neutral and set the parking brake.
2. Do not begin hoisting dump bed vehicles until instructed to do so.
3. If you have any problems with the mechanism that allows grain to flow out of your vehicle, inform the dump pit operator of the best method to operate this problem equipment.
4. DO NOT use cell phones in the dump pit.
5. DO NOT PROCEED BACK TO THE SCALE UNTIL THE DUMP OPERATOR SIGNALS TO YOU THAT IT IS OK TO MOVE.