Power Take Off – Rotating Hazards Fatality File

PTO Hazards

A 70-year-old farmer was killed while mowing his pasture. He had completed mowing the grass around the top of a ridge and was beginning to mow the sloping sections when the PTO shaft connecting the rotary mower to the tractor came off. When he attempted to re-attach the shaft, the tractor began to roll down the steep slope; he lost control as it descended into the hollow. He attempted to jump from the left side of the tractor, and his right foot became wedged between the high/low shift lever. As a result, his body went under the left rear tire and was caught between the tire, the ground, and a cement water basin. Emergency medical services pronounced the farmer dead at the scene.

A 24-year-old male farmer died after becoming entangled in the unguarded rotating driveline shaft of a manure spreader. The spreader was connected to a tractor equipped with a PTO, which powered the spreader driveline. The victim was working alone in the barnyard, replacing a bolt on the shaft. He had completed this task and was standing on ice-covered soil near the rotating driveline. Then, he either slipped and fell onto the driveline or the rotating shaft caught his clothing. The PTO spun him around the driveshaft, where portions of his clothing were entangled and torn from his body. His wife approached the site of the incident when her husband had not returned to the farmhouse as expected, and found him entangled on the driveline. The tractor engine was not running. Emergency services pronounced the farmer dead at the scene.

A 17-year-old male farm worker died when he became trapped in a hay baler that caught fire. The farm worker was working alone baling dried wheat straw for hay. Evidence suggests that the round hay baler became jammed, and the clutch temporarily shut down the

PTO. The worker climbed on top of the baler to clear the jammed wheat straw by using his feet. The jam cleared, and the clutch put the PTO back into motion. The baler rollers suddenly started moving and trapped the workers’ legs inside the baler. The rollers and belts spinning around the hay started a fire. The worker died at the scene from smoke inhalation and burns.