

Darke County Extension News Release

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The SMV Celebrates 50 Years



The Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) emblem celebrates its 50th Anniversary! This emblem, recognized for safety around the U.S., was developed in the Agricultural Engineering Department at The Ohio State University in the early 60's. In 1963 this emblem was dedicated to the public by the OSU President Novice G. Fawcett. Testing was conducted by Ken Harkness, an OSU Ag Engineer, and his team of graduate students to determine the best shape and color for this roadway safety symbol. A 1/16 scale highway simulator was constructed to test human recognition rates of slow moving vehicles with most of the testing conducted outside of the Ives Hall Building (no longer standing on OSU campus).

The first formal introduction of the SMV emblem was at a safety seminar in 1962, where Deere and Company took interest in the design and became an avid promoter. The emblem was adopted by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE) and in less than 2 years became part of many states' roadway legislation. In 1971 the SMV emblem became the first ASAE Standard to be adopted as a national standard by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI).

Dee Jepsen, State Agricultural Safety and Health Leader, shares that last month, Ohio hosted the annual conference of the International Society for Agricultural Safety and Health - a professional association dedicated to the welfare of farmers and ranchers. Besides members from the United States, 7 other countries were in attendance. A luncheon speaker featured OSU's own Ted Gastier (a faculty emeriti), who was one of the original graduate students on the design project. Ted gave an excellent presentation to safety professionals around the country who often promote the SMV emblem in their area, but may have never known some of the "behind the scenes" tactics used in the development of the emblem.

It is with great pride that Ohio can boast the development of this emblem by OSU faculty and students. For 50 years, this emblem has been behind agricultural equipment and horse-drawn vehicles warning the motoring public of a Slow Moving Vehicle!

Just to review what is required and recommended for agricultural equipment while traveling on public roads:

- At all times, an Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) emblem is required
- Headlights and taillights are required 30 minutes after sunrise and 30 minutes before sunset
- Headlights and taillights are required during day hours if inclement weather conditions exist, including fog and rain
- Additional extremity lighting is required on dual-wheeled tractors
- Amber flashers and turn signals are recommended at all times
- Ideally towed implements should have their own reflectors, lights, and an SMV emblem. However law requires these items be present when the implement blocks the lighting/marking configuration on the tractor.

In addition to lighting and marking on equipment, other items should be considered while traveling on public roads:

- Safety cables or chains should be used in any towing situation.
- Lock tractor brakes together before traveling on public roadways
- Wear seat belt while operating tractors with ROPS
- Ohio law states that only one wagon/implement may be towed behind any vehicle with two exceptions:
 - Towing with a tractor - More than one wagon/implement may be towed. While no maximum is indicated, common sense and safety should play a role in the decision.
 - Towing with a pickup or straight truck -A truck designed by the manufacturer to carry a load of not less than 1/2 ton and not more than 2 tons may tow two wagons/implements.
- Use escort vehicle when possible

Additional information on lighting and marking of agricultural equipment can be found on Ohioline, Factsheet # AEX_598_08 Boosting Visibility of Ag Equipment
http://ohioline.osu.edu/aex-fact/pdf/AEX_598_08.pdf

For more detailed information, visit the Darke County OSU Extension web site at www.darke.osu.edu, the OSU Extension Darke County Facebook page or contact Sam Custer, at 937.548.5215.