

September 16, 2021

Road Safety Tips

Pumpkin spice flavored drinks and cooler weather may be signs of Fall for most, but nothing says Fall is coming more than seeing combines getting greased up and harvest equipment in the field. We might be on the heels of Fall, but harvest is underway in Frederick County! This means more farm equipment on the roads and that means we have to remember to share the road. I would like to urge motorists to remain mindful of farm equipment. Moving equipment for farmers is not an easy task, so here are a few safety tips.

For Motorists:

- Know the Slow Moving Vehicle emblem. This orange triangle with a red outline is the indicator that you are approaching a slow vehicle. Immediately slow down. If you are driving 55 mph and come upon a tractor that is going 15 mph, it only takes five seconds to close a gap the length of a football field between you and the tractor.
- Be patient. Most farm equipment will only be travelling a short distance to the next field or farm. If you follow a tractor that is going 20 mph for two miles, it only takes six minutes; this is the equivalent of waiting for two stoplights in town.
- Yield to wide vehicles. If a piece of farm equipment is travelling in the opposite direction, and you cannot pass safely, stop. Pull off to the side or turn onto a road or driveway, so that both of you can get by safely.
- Pass only if it is safe to do so. A farmer may pull over so that you can pass. If the farmer does not pull over, only pass if you can clearly see into the oncoming lane of traffic ahead of you and the farm equipment.
- Do not assume that farm equipment that pulls to the right side is making a right turn or letting you pass. Due to the larger size of farm equipment, farmers may need to make wide left turns. Watch for turn signals or hand signals, and do not pass until you know which way the farmer is going and it is safe to do so.

Remember to support your local Frederick County Farmers and Agribusiness.

If you have any question or if I can be of any assistance please give me a call at 301-600-3577 or email jjhurry@umd.edu. For more information about the University of Maryland Extension Frederick County Office check out our website <http://extension.umd.edu/locations/frederick-county>
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