

## Wisconsin Agri-Business Association and OSHA Take a Stand for Grain Engulfment Prevention

[Wisconsin Agri-Business Association](#) (WABA) and [OSHA](#) have teamed up for the second year in a row to educate both the agribusiness industry and the farming community on the hazards posed by growing, harvesting, storing, and processing grain by participating in OSHA's National Safety Stand-Up for Grain Safety Week on April 9 to 13, 2018. Three half-day seminars were held at various locations throughout the state and were offered free of charge to all attendees. In addition to covering engulfment prevention, other topics presented included bin/confined space entry, entanglement hazards, machine guarding, lockout, housekeeping, and combustible dust. The highlight of the event was a combustible dust explosion demonstration conducted inside an explosion chamber.

WABA Safety Director Jim Nolte coordinated the seminar venues, registration, and agenda and co-presented along with OSHA Compliance Assistance Specialists Leslie Ptak, Kelly Bubolz and Mary Bauer. According to Nolte, "It would be nearly impossible for us to hold an event such as this without the support of sponsors committed to agricultural safety." Fox Valley Technical College, Chippewa Valley Technical College, and the University of Wisconsin Arlington research facility all donated classroom space for these events. For their generosity, all students enrolled in the Ag programs at these colleges were welcome to attend and many did. "Having students attend these events was encouraging as it enabled them to interact with both industry participants as well as safety experts and hopefully broadened their knowledge as they embark on their careers in agriculture," Nolte said.

Although farms do not qualify for membership within WABA and many small family run farms are not regulated by OSHA, an effort was made by partnering with the Wisconsin Corn Growers Association to get the word out to the farming community about the Grain Stand Up events. According to Nolte, farming is the most dangerous occupation in the U.S. "Year in and year out, statistics show approximately 70% of the grain entrapment and engulfment incidents occur on the farm while the remaining 30% occur at commercial facilities that are regulated by OSHA safety standards. Farmers, their employees and more importantly, family members, are exposed to all of the same hazards as those found at commercial grain facilities which is why the farming community was also invited to this event," Nolte explained.

A total of 54 people attended the Grain Stand Up events with a good mix of industry and student representation. Five persons from three farms attended the sessions. "We had hoped to have more farm attendance at these sessions but hopefully the word will spread and we will see more farmers attending in the future," Nolte said. Both WABA and OSHA look forward to continuing their partnership and participating in future Grain Stand Up events.