



SESSION 1: WHY SAFETY = SUCCESS: HOW TO GET FARMER BUY-IN

SPEAKERS:

- **Gord Meek**, Regional Deputy Fire Chief, MD of Greenview, Alberta
- **Tim MacRae**, BeGrainSafe Master Trainer and Training Officer, Georgina Fire Department, Ontario
- **Jeanette Dame**, TC Energy, Public Awareness Program Manager
- **Jeff Dilling**, TC Energy, Regional Land Representative
- **Reg Steward**, Owner at Buffalo Creek Consulting & Cowboy Services and AgSafeBC's Provincial Ranching Safety Consultant

BRIEF SUMMARY:

This session's aim was to provide insights into what it takes to change long-standing on-farm behaviours and beliefs and explore strategies that have worked to encourage shifts in on-farm safety culture.

Developing buy-in: Various presenters pointed out that the key to getting buy-in is developing a personal connection. Having roots in the community helps to build trust. "You can pretend to care, but you can't pretend to be there."

Putting it into practice: As it was pointed out, no one wants to come home from a long day in the field and fill out paperwork if there's not strong case for it. Any change has to make sense and be worth the time. When you can demonstrate that ramping up safety efforts results in better worker retention, quality control, and generally, a better health and safety record, then it starts making more sense.

No farmer is handing over the keys and saying, "go" – there are processes in place. It's about integrating a safety plan into what already exists – making it a part of doing business, rather than an add-on. This type of training also says to the employee, "We value you, we want you around." Simply put, it's good business.

On-the-ground realities: There was also some point made regarding generations. How the younger generations are learning from their elders and absorbing some of the long-standing beliefs. Some common attitudes discussed were: "It's my land and I do what I want with it"; "We've always done it this way"; "Don't have time, it'll be fine, we'll take care of it later"; "Stuff happens, it just happens."

The speakers acknowledged that when working with short seasons, a multitude of stressors, and the success of the business often landing heavy on farm owner's shoulders the attitudes mentioned

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above can set it. However, it was also noted that when an incident happens, there are a multitude of regrets for not putting safety measures in place. If safety measures are practical and efficient, farmers will be better able to implement.

Being a leader, providing solutions:

- Don't tell them what they already know. Come with practical, real solutions. Make it relatable.
- Safety adjustments should have simplicity of design and be cost efficient
- Integrate safety measures into already existing processes that the farmer is doing
- Educate the youth. Younger generations are sometimes not aware of the dangers. They've grown up or learned from older generations with long-standing beliefs.
- Come from perspective of, "What worries you – what keeps you up at night?". Solutions should respond to a need.
- Different people will need different approaches. Assess and know your audience.

Successes: CASA's BeGrainSafe program was highlighted as a successful example of influencing safety culture. A presenter noted the training was delivered to over 250 volunteer firefighters – many of whom are farmers themselves. Many didn't realize how quickly you can be submerged and entrapped. It made them think and reach out to help make their farmyards safer. Another presenter highlighted how the training led to a successful bin rescue.

Take-away safety messages shared by the presenters at the end of the session, included the importance of managing fatigue and how fatigue could drastically impact how we act or react. A presenter also noted the importance of calling 911 immediately in the event of an incident and resisting the urge to 'do it yourself' – often, every minute counts.

RELEVANT RESOURCES:

- **Youth Energy Safe Award:** <https://www.tcenergy.com/sustainability/safety/youth-energy-safe/#yesawards>
- **Youth Energy training kit:** <https://www.tcenergy.com/sustainability/safety/youth-energy-safe/#requestakit>
- **CASA's BeGrainSafe program:** <https://www.casa-acsa.ca/en/begrainsafe/>
- **Testimonial video: encountering a petroleum pipeline while installing field tile:** <http://www.pipelineagsafety.org/resources/drain-tile-lessons-learned-video/>

MEETING LINKS:

- Watch the session recording here: <https://youtu.be/qZb-Hg61rM4>