

16-Minute Checklist

— for 'May days'



So it's Spring and you've been running around for the past five weeks like a chicken without a head? Join the club.

Somehow, it seems that every May day ends up in some sort of a "mayday" call. Just be sure that the problems are simple agronomic challenges and not disasters that will require a real 911 call.

Safety specialists at Ohio State University put together a checklist for the shop area. I went through it – the version below takes about 16 minutes to complete (not counting time required to fix problems). Just review the list and note whether it's "OK" or "Needs Work" on your to-do list. It's worth doing:

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Power tools are properly grounded or double insulated and have prior guards/shields

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Welding/cutting torch gas cylinders are properly secured

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Extra gas cylinders have caps over valves

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Extra oxygen and acetylene are stored at least 20 feet apart

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Welding/cutting torch area are properly ventilated

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Welding rods are removed from clamps when not in use

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** There is 35 feet between welding area and combustibles

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Portable ladders are in good repair, modified not to conduct electricity, and are free of paint (which hides cracks)

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Lawn mowers are fitted with discharge deflectors over moving parts

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Mowers have proper shielding for deck belts and other moving parts

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Mowers have operational safety interlocks

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Hearing protection is available for all motorized equipment

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** People use helmets and gloves approved by the Department of Transportation when using an ATV

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** First aid kits are in easily accessible locations

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** First aid kits are fully stocked – and the material is less than 2 years old

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Fire extinguishers are in accessible locations

☐ **OK** ☐ **Needs Work** Ponds, cisterns, wells, etc. are either secured or have rescue equipment (like ropes, flotation devices, harnesses) nearby

Some time spent now will eliminate a lot of sorrow later on. Assign someone to walk around with this list and be sure to follow-up on those that fall into the "Needs Work" category. You'll save time in the end.

— Curt Harler

In Future Issues

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