



February 20, 2020

Dear Grain Storage Facility Operators:

Grain bin deaths spike as farmers rush late harvest! There have been at least 15-grain engulfment fatalities since August, compared with 27 deaths nation-wide in 2018. The Midwest experienced 21-grain engulfment fatalities from 2015 to 2019. Everyone working in the feed or grain industry needs to understand the dangers involved with entering grain bins and the procedures to make it as safe as possible.

Heavy rains in 2019 contributed to record floods across the central United States, causing unprecedented delays in planting crops and resulting in the fall harvest being stored with a high moisture content, increasing the possibility of grain clumping and molding. This may cause workers to enter bins to clear crops from sidewalls and augers to allow the grain to flow from the storage bin. Similar weather conditions in 2009 resulted in the industry's highest number of injuries and fatalities with 51 workers engulfed by grain stored in bins and 26 fatally injured in 2010.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), along with the National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA), and other key industry stakeholders are working together to raise awareness of OSHA resources and industry best practices to identify potential hazards at grain, feed, and processing facilities to prevent engulfment and other injuries. In accordance with Region V's [Local Emphasis Program for the Grain Handling Industry](#), OSHA will be conducting un-programmed enforcement inspections focusing on the six major hazard areas: engulfment, falls, auger entanglement, struck by, combustible dust explosions and electrocution.

To encourage workers and employers to be vigilant at all times, OSHA and NGFA are asking companies to review safety procedures and participate in [Grain Safety Stand-Up](#) events during the week of [April 13-17, 2020](#). Safety Stand-Ups are voluntary events for employers to talk directly to employees, suppliers, and customers about safety. A Safety Stand-Up may include taking a break to have a toolbox talk or engage in other safety activities such as safety equipment inspections, developing a rescue plan, or discussing job specific hazards. Further information is available on OSHA's website www.osha.gov.

We are hoping that you will help share our commitment to preventing tragic grain related injuries and fatalities. If you have further questions, please contact your local OSHA Office, or the OSHA On-Site Safety and Health Consultation Program in your state. Additional information and resources are available on OSHA Fact Sheet at www.osha.gov/Publications/grainstorageFACTSHEET.pdf

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Francis Yebesi".

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Francis Yebesi
Acting Regional Administrator