

## Tips for “Tommy’s Troubles” Simulation Exercise

### Content

This is a story about a 14-year-old boy who tries to help his dad by using a rotary mower to cut down tall weeds in an overgrown pasture. This is the first time the boy has done this job, and his dad isn’t home. The boy has to hurry to finish the job so that he can leave for a ball game. Soon he gets into trouble. The exercise illustrates the hazards of bushhogging, why it is important to supervise teenage farm workers, and why it is important to wear a seat belt on a ROPS-equipped tractor.

### Objectives

This exercise can help farm family members and other people become more aware of:

- the hazards involved in mowing pastures with a rotary mower
- how and why farm children and youth with limited training and supervision sometimes take on dangerous jobs
- the great protection a ROPS and fastened seat belt provides to the tractor operator during an overturn

### Intended Audiences

- Young and adult farm men and women
- Vocational agriculture students, 4-H teens, and other youth groups
- Community groups that operate farm-safety day camps and programs
- Farm community groups that provide educational, financial, business, social, spiritual, and health services to farmers and their family members

### How to Use These Materials

- Review the exercise problem booklet, answer the questions, and look at the answer key.
- Decide if the exercise is useful to you or others with whom you work.
- Use the materials in any of these ways:
  - ⇒ Use the materials as an activity for a meeting or class. The “Tommy’s Troubles” exercise is a story with a plot, characters, and predicaments. It has been used with more than 800 people. Once they begin the story, people want to complete it. Therefore:
  - ⇒ Administer the exercise in one 20-minute session. Allow another 20 minutes for discussion. Have people work in groups of three to five persons. Give everyone his or her own problem booklet.

- ⇒ When each small group finishes, give them an answer key. Make sure everyone has a chance to compare his or her answers to the answer key. The key tells more about the story and the situation. It also contains other factual information.
- ⇒ Make sure everyone has a chance to discuss the story.
- Give the materials to a person and ask the individual to complete the exercise when convenient.
- Use the materials for school or community projects about tractor and farm safety. (Ask students or adults to complete the exercise and then to discuss it with others. An alternative is to make a short presentation or display about the value of seat belts on ROPS-equipped tractors. The drawings in the exercise problem booklet can be used as part of a display or presentation. The newspaper clippings, fatality report, and graphs that are found in the problem booklet and the answer key can also be used as parts of presentations and displays along with other materials found in this notebook.)

### **Materials Needed**

- “Tommy’s Troubles” problem booklet (duplicate one copy for each person).
- Answer key for the “Tommy’s Troubles” exercise (duplicate one copy for each person or at least one copy for each group of three or four individuals).

### **Discussion Questions and Teaching Points**

1. Do events like those described in this exercise happen to real farm families?
2. Do you know about a similar case that resulted in a close call, injury, or fatality?
3. Are you, members of your family, or other people who work on your farm at risk of similar injury events?
4. If you have children or grandchildren who live on farms (or who visit your farm or other people’s farms), what are some things you can do to help these young people learn to work safely with tractors and machinery?
5. How important do you think it is for adults to set a good example for children and farm youth when it comes to working safely and efficiently?

### **Ideas, Notes, and Comments**

Use this space to write down your ideas and plans for using these materials.