

Illinois State Police provides travel tips for harvest season

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DUQUOIN – Harvest Season is in full swing and Illinois State Police District 13 / 22 Interim Commander, Lieutenant Shane Alvey, urges motorists to be alert while traveling on rural roadways.

As farmers move equipment from field to field they will be traveling at much slower speeds than the rest of the motoring public. Drivers should be aware of farm vehicles and prepare to slow down when encountering them. Here are some harvest season safety tips:

- Farm equipment, which travels at speeds of 25 mph or less, is required to have a slow moving vehicle emblem (bright orange triangle) mounted to the rear of the vehicle.
- If traffic begins to back up behind the farm equipment, the operator should pull over in a safe location and allow traffic to pass.
- Farmers should avoid movements of farm equipment prior to sunrise and after sunset. Visibility is limited during these times.
- Even if the farm equipment operator motions for you to pass, motorists should not attempt to pass farm equipment unless it is legal and safe to do so.
- Remember, most farm equipment does not have turn signals. Often times crashes between farm equipment and passenger vehicles occur as the farm equipment is making a left turn and a passenger vehicle is passing the farm equipment on the left.
- Anytime you approach farm equipment you should slow down. Even vehicles approaching from the opposite direction should slow down. Farm equipment may be over-width and encroaching into the opposite lane of travel.
- When approaching farm equipment traveling in the opposite direction, be alert for impatient drivers passing at the wrong time.
- As always, keep a safe speed, maintain a safe following distance, do not drive distracted, and be patient.

“We all share a responsibility to keep our roadways safe”, stated Lt. Alvey. He continued by saying, “For motorists, obeying the traffic laws regarding passing in a safe location, increasing following distances behind wide implements, and paying attention to one’s speed; and for the farmer, ensuring all lights on the farm equipment are functioning and visible, along with the proper application of reflective tape and slow moving vehicle emblems, combined with a large measure of courtesy from both go a long way toward that end goal of safety, especially during the harvest.”