

PEOPLE MOVERS AND HAYRIDES

Some fairgoers may need assistance getting around the grounds. Often, volunteers are tasked with conveying these patrons using golf carts, tram trailers and other types of people movers. Even driven at lower speeds, these conveyances can pose risks. Plans should be put into place to ensure that riders and drivers arrive at their destinations safely. Hayrides, in particular, present greater risk, and care should be taken to ensure patrons' safety.

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PEOPLE MOVERS

Whether fair patrons are transported via a golf cart or by a tram hitched to a tractor, the primary function is to move people from one location to another. The following are some safety guidelines to follow to reduce the risk when transporting people.

No matter the style of people mover, vehicles should only be used on well-maintained, flat and even surfaces

to reduce the risk of jarring bumps and tip overs. All drivers should be familiar with the route, trained and certified as required by state and local jurisdictions. Drivers should wear high-visibility vests as they may be in close proximity to other moving vehicles.

GOLF CARTS

- Inspect golf carts daily before use. Ensure that the tires are properly inflated; and that steering, acceleration and braking are in proper working condition.
- Avoid sharp turns, fast acceleration and sudden braking. The speed of operation should be no greater than a brisk walk (less than 15 mph). Golf carts are typically lightweight, have a high center of gravity and are more prone to tipping over, especially at speed or on rough, uneven terrain.
- Operators should be trained about the safe operation of the specific vehicle used.
- Only carry as many passengers as seats allow. Do not squeeze extra people aboard or allow passengers to sit or stand on nonseating areas.
- Ensure cargo does not impede operator's ability to drive.



Golf Carts are a popular choice for transportation at fairs.

- Seat belts should be used by all people in the vehicle if the vehicle is equipped with them.
- When parking, engage the parking brake. Keys should not remain in the vehicle when unattended.

Golf Cart Batteries

An often unrecognized hazard of electric golf carts comes from their batteries. Be sure to follow appropriate warnings from the owner's manual. Some common hazards include:

- **Corrosive acids:** Can cause severe injury if they are released. Many golf carts require owners to monitor the water and electrolyte levels of lead/acid batteries and add water as necessary. Make sure appropriate maintenance is followed.
- **Charging batteries:** Flammable hydrogen gases are a byproduct of charging, which can ignite and lead to fires. Always charge batteries in a well-ventilated area, and keep all ignition sources away.
- **Battery chargers:** Chargers can also cause fires or other electrical hazards. If batteries are left to charge overnight and cords have frayed, they could overheat, causing a fire. Similarly, using the wrong charger for the battery could cause batteries to overload and ignite. Always check chargers before use to ensure the cords are in good repair and the charger matches the battery to be charged. Unplug chargers from the outlet once batteries are charged.
- **Electrical arcs or electrocution:** This can occur when metal items contact battery terminals, leading to burns or electrocution. These are often caused by metal watches, jewelry or tools. When handling batteries, be sure to wear insulated gloves and use insulated tools. Additionally, remove any metal watches or jewelry.



TRAM TRAILERS

- Perform a daily inspection of the pulling vehicle and trailer that follows a checklist or best practices detailed in the vehicle’s owner manual.
- Know the trailer’s weight capacity and do not exceed weight ratings.
- Ensure that the hitch and tow vehicle are rated for the trailer.
- Do not operate vehicle and trailer until:
 - The coupler is secured and locked.
 - The safety chains are secured.
 - The trailer jack is fully retracted.
 - The trailer lights are connected and checked.
 - The trailer breakaway brake switch (if installed) is connected.
- Operate at a slow speed; less than 15 mph.



Inspect pulling vehicle and trailer daily before use.

HAYRIDES

A popular event at many fairs, haunted houses or other venues is to transport guests in a hay wagon. Unfortunately, several serious and even fatal accidents have occurred during hayrides in Minnesota and around the country.

Hayrides are typically considered a form of transportation, and liability coverage from them is likely provided by MCIT. *If a third party is providing the equipment and drivers, refer to Chapter 11: Vendors and Exhibitors for agreement, indemnification and coverage recommendations.*

For hayrides where the purpose is other than transportation only, the amusement exclusion likely applies and no coverage is available from MCIT. Coverage should be arranged outside MCIT.



Safety should be the primary concern when hayrides are offered.

If organized hayrides are offered, safety should be a primary concern. Most of the past accidents could have been avoided or reduced by following simple safety precautions.

HAYRIDE SAFETY GUIDELINES

Some safety guidelines to reduce the risk when operating hayrides are noted below.

VEHICLE CONSIDERATIONS:

- Ensure that the tractor pulling the wagon weighs more than the gross weight of the wagon it will tow to ensure for adequate braking and traction.
- The wagon must be properly secured with a well-designed hitch pin and safety chains.
- Rearview mirrors should be installed that give a full view of the wagon behind.
- Railings of adequate height should be installed on the wagon to prevent passengers from falling off during the ride.
- Do not overload the capacity of the wagon, and only allow the appropriate number of passengers that can be properly seated.



ROUTE PLANNING AND MAINTENANCE:

- Avoid steep grades, overhead branches, wires, sharp turns, blind corners and areas with poor drainage.
- Routes should not cross public roads or highways.
- The route should be easily accessible to emergency vehicles and clearly marked with barriers installed to prevent individuals or animals from entering the route.
- Keep the route in good condition to minimize hazards. Potholes, tire-ruts, downed branches or other debris can be jarring and cause people to lose their balance and fall.

DRIVER TRAINING

- Drivers should be familiar with the operation of the vehicle, understand the route and proceed slowly (typically a little over walking pace) with caution.
- The driver should be experienced in transporting people and of a legal age to do so.
- A plan should be in place to deal with items such as flat tires, inclement weather and unruly passengers; and ensure communication tools are available.
- Consider rehearsal runs for drivers to practice.

VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

- Vehicles should be serviced per manufacturer guidelines.
- Vehicles should be inspected daily to determine if lights are working; steps and railings are secure; and seating areas are free of sharp edges, loose boards and exposed screws and nails.
- Ensure hay is dry, as wet hay can create a slip hazard.
- Before each trip, confirm proper tire inflation and that the hitch is secure.

LOADING AND UNLOADING

A common source of injuries occurs as people enter or exit vehicles, particularly when the vehicles require passengers and drivers to step up to enter or step down to exit.

- Require three points of contact when entering or exiting these vehicles to minimize accidents.
- Provide a sturdy stepping platform with a handrail for passengers to use when mounting or dismounting the wagon. Assistants may help people access larger wagons.
- Separate loading and unloading areas; everyone should be off the wagon prior to loading additional riders.

- To increase stability and help prevent wagons from rolling away, they should only be loaded after they are connected to the tractor.
- Do not allow passengers to climb over the sides to enter or exit the wagon.

PASSENGER SAFETY RULES

Inform passengers of rules when riding to improve safety. These rules vary depending on the vehicle or the event, but some of the most common rules include:

- Remain seated while the vehicle is in motion
- No smoking
- No lighters
- No alcohol
- Arms and legs must remain in the vehicle at all times
- Horseplay will not be tolerated
- Passengers must remain in the passenger area only, no riding with the driver

SUPERVISION

- Adult supervisors should be present to ensure that safety rules are being followed during the ride and communicate with the driver.
- Adult supervisors can assist with loading and unloading.
- The number of supervisors may change based upon the amount of children present.

ROLLOVER PROTECTION STRUCTURES

Vehicles used on the ride, particularly tractors pulling hayrides, should be equipped with adequate rollover protection structures.

SIGNS AND LIGHTS

If the route includes travel on or over a road where other vehicles or farm equipment may be traveling, “slow moving vehicle” signs and emblems should be present along with appropriate lighting for the vehicle and any trailers.

TOWING

- Vehicles should only tow one trailer at a time.
- The vehicle towing the trailer should have sufficient strength and weight to pull and anchor the trailer.



EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT:

- Haryrides should be equipped with a fire extinguisher and first-aid kit.
- Drivers should have equipment to call for help should an emergency arise.

For further information regarding route planning, communication and visibility, see Chapter 30, Site Control, and for more details about vehicle use, see Chapter 32, Vehicle Use.

WEATHER

Rain or other inclement weather can influence the route and make areas significantly more slippery or hazardous. Additional care should be taken in rainy conditions or rides must be suspended until weather improves. In the case of lightning or other more severe weather or winds, rides should be suspended until the weather improves.