

Five safety priorities for farmers during manure application

NEWS CHRONICLE

AMES — National Farm Safety and Health Week 2025 is Sept. 21–27, and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach reminds operators that safety is critical when handling, transporting and applying manure.

Associate professor and extension agriculture engineering specialist Daniel Andersen highlights five key manure safety tips to help farmers, as well as their families and communities, stay safe and healthy.

- Equipment and rural road safety

In Iowa, rear-end collisions often occur during busy harvest and manure application seasons, and research shows that states with strong lighting and marking standards for agricultural equipment have significantly fewer crashes.

Andersen encourages those sharing the road with farmers operating equipment to allow space, patience and respect, because “40 tons of machinery is not very forgiving.”

- Health and wellness

Manure application season demands long hours, early mornings and late nights. Staying hydrated and eating balanced meals provides the fuel needed to handle the stress and unpredictability of fall work. Adequate rest also remains important, as fatigue slows reaction time.

- Generations of farming

Farms are great places for kids to grow up, but they can also be dangerous, especially around manure storage and equipment. Youth should never be allowed near manure pits or pumps. Training, supervision and protective gear are essential before letting a young person help with chores.

- Confined spaces

Manure pits, tanks and pump rooms are confined spaces. Liquid manures release potentially hazardous gases (hydrogen sulfide, methane and ammonia) as the manure ages and decomposes. Manure movement, such as pumping and agitation, causes the rapid release of these gases.

- Biological safety

Manure carries more than nutrients — it can also hold pathogens. Those working with manure should wear protective clothing, gloves and boots, and practice proper hygiene, including washing hands after handling manure. Preventing exposure helps reduce human and animal health risks by limiting potential spread from barn to barn or site to site.

Fall manure application is a busy season and essential for crop nutrition, but safety cannot be overlooked. Following these guidelines helps farmers protect themselves and families.

For more information, contact Melissa McEnany at mmce-nany@iastate.edu or Andersen at dsai@iastate.edu.

‘The evil giggle’

Sash, Hilmer pick up where they left off at Tama County Supervisors meeting; SCW2 agreement reached

MICHAEL D. DAVIS
CORRESPONDENT

This week’s Tama County Supervisors meeting started off with the pistol shot of contentious discord. Former Zoning Commission member Craig Sash took umbrage with Supervisor Curt Hilmer for being kicked out of last week’s meeting. Sash presented Hilmer with a copy of the supervisors’ oath of office and made the argument that when he was thrown out for telling Hilmer to “Shut up,” he stepped on his First Amendment right to free speech.

Hilmer’s response was that he had initiated a conversation with the person standing next to Sash and not Sash himself, and that, according to public comment policy, he did what he was allowed to do. The two men went back and forth on the issue some more. At one point, Sash uttered a chuckle that Hilmer mocked and asked, “What’s the evil giggle mean?”

The usual breeze through agenda item of approving the last meeting minutes was another point of controversy as Supervisor Heather Knebel made a motion to take out a large chunk. The redacted passage was six paragraphs of the Supervisors’ discussion on the Salt Creek II development, which ultimately failed by a 3-2 vote. During the later public comment time, the subject of transparency was brought up, and Knebel addressed this concern.

“It’s nothing to do with that. If we don’t for other things, we’ve never put what our discussion item is, we’re not gonna do it just for one topic. If we don’t do it for every topic,” she said.

The stricken paragraphs can be found published at the end of this article.

The Tama County Engineer, Ben Daleske, reported that they are reworking 275th St. and C Avenue into a T intersection. Iowa Bridge and Culvert finished the box and are working on the culvert. PCI has removed the bridge and is working on the substructure. Manatt’s

is on to E66 to start the Cold-In-Place; this should go on until November. They are still working on O Avenue between 200th & 210th, replacing a low water stream crossing. They are also continuing to retrieve shoulders this week. The Supervisors approved a utility permit.

The previously scheduled Zoning Ordinance Fee Public Hearing for Oct. 13 was changed to the same date, but for 9:30 AM, instead of its previously scheduled time.

After a nearly hour-long closed session, the supervisors came back to discuss the Salt Creek Wind 2 issues. After publicly stating their opinions on the current deal, they unanimously approved all actions pertaining to the Salt Creek Wind 2 project, including the Road Use Agreement, Decommissioning Plan, Settlement Agreement, and resolution. Before the vote, Knebel spoke about how they got to this point.

“So, after our last meeting, the biggest trend was that per Iowa Code 335, a few of us felt like it needed to go to the Board of Adjustment. What I didn’t want to see happen is this agreement to go away. I think Mark and David did a good job negotiating it,” she said.

Knebel went on to talk about how after supervisor David Turner took himself off the negotiating team, Knebel got the phone number of CEO of Nations Energy Solutions and the owner of Salt Creek Wind Phase II, Sean Roberts.

“So, I called him up, and I said, you know, it needs to go to the Board of Adjustment, can we make that happen? And he was completely accommodating. You know he’s wanted it to go to the Board of Adjustment and so he got back with his team and they agreed yes that they could put in there so if you look in the agreement, there’s a couple different spots, but under number 5 effective date this agreement shall become effective after SCW2 has arranged a CUP from the Board of Adjustment of Tama County or an equivalent authority to proceed with construction has been

granted to SCW2 and any appeals period for the same have expired without any ongoing legal or administrative challenges for the avoidance of doubt if SCW2 is not issued a CUP then this agreement, the road use agreement, and the decommissioning plan shall become void of no effect,” she said. “So, that was the item where it was added, so ultimately, what that means is the board of adjustment will have their opportunity to meet and hear it, and I want, this is all in good faith, it’s not like I’m just doing this, let’s send it there so it fails, this is good faith. Let it go to the Board of Adjustment.”

The supervisors also designated Attorney Tom Henderson for the County Board of Adjustment, and approved the Chairman to sign a rental agreement for the BOA to reserve the Reinig Center for a meeting.

Claims totaling \$102,059.83 were approved.

Redacted paragraphs

Supervisor Turner stated he was for the agreements and that he is voting on truths and facts. He had spoken to young farmers and sees this as a landowner right and can see where this could lead to legal action. He also stated how the city of Toledo, South Tama School District and Chamber of Commerce is in favor of the agreement. He believes that if it is deferred to the board of adjustment that would be a delaying tactic.

Supervisor Hilmer stated his problem is how this all happened. He stated this has been all lies and bullying. That only a small number of farmers are struggling. He stated he will agree with what the board of adjustment says. He stated today has been great, but that he will always be against them and that he can never be in favor of it.

Supervisor Knebel stated that this needs to go before the board of adjustment. She then read Iowa Code and what the powers of the board are. She stated that she enjoyed the conversation today, but

that they are not meeting the ordinance. She stated that we have the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and that this needs to be changed to industrial. She stated property values will be affected and that there could be health issues. She stated she will vote no today and that she wants to digest what was discussed today and have lawyers and the public review it. She stated board of adjustment, per the ordinance, should be hearing it.

Supervisor Doland stated that everything negotiated today and all stipulations from today will all go away if not approved today. If this goes to the board of adjustment, it will end up in court and we could be sued for millions. He stated the county’s attorney has said that the board of supervisors can approve the agreements. He stated other things in the county are suffering because this is all that has been worked on. He said that Knebel has stated in the past that they have vested rights. He said Hilmer has said what is another 27 when we have 80. He stated the board of supervisors do have the power today to approve these agreements. He stated he is tired of wasting county resources and is trying to stop a lawsuit.

Supervisor Kupka stated that he is the deciding factor and to just take the vote. I’ll tell you how I feel when we get there. Knebel asked why we would lose everything that has been negotiated. Doland stated if we can’t come up with an agreement means we will end up in litigation. Our own attorney has said that we would. It’s not a threat or a scare tactic, it is what is going to happen. They have agreed to all of our terms other than the \$2 million. Why would you vote no? Hilmer said he had made that comment, but after 45 calls he has changed his mind. Knebel stated she has been the wind person and would have handled the negotiations. She stated the \$1.3 million is all we are losing and that it should go to the board of adjustment.

Starting off on a Goodenbour

This week’s Toledo City Council meeting

MICHAEL D. DAVIS
CORRESPONDENT

This week’s Toledo City Council meeting started with Ryan Goodenbour. The coordinator for Tama County Emergency Management gave a presentation to the council explaining what he does and all that his department is responsible for.

Next up was the Toledo Public Library, which recently had a central air conditioner quit. As the library is getting older, the council and library representatives discussed plans to plan for future repairs. Money will be transferred from the city to the library’s budget to cover the cost of the approximately \$7,000 air conditioner.

The council officially set Halloween trick or treating for Oct. 31 from 5 to 7 p.m.

The FY25 annual urban renewal report was approved.

Kaiyla Wacha was approved for a \$1 an hour



Tama County Emergency Management Coordinator Ryan Goodenbour gave a presentation to the Toledo City Council during Monday night’s meeting.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL D. DAVIS

raise as she got her Iowa Certified Municipal Clerk Certification.

The public works department reported that the UV system is installed and just about up and running. They have been moving dirt, and there have been problems with the installation of the merry-go-round, as some of the wrong parts

were sent. The streets have also been patched.

Toledo Economic Development reported that their office is all set up they are just waiting for the official signs to be done. They are working on multiple projects and looking at many boards and commissions.

Toledo Police Chief

Dan Quigley reported that between Sept. 8 and 21, they responded to 92 calls for service and made two arrests. On Sept. 19, officers responded to an accident involving a vehicle and a pedestrian. The pedestrian was transported by Tama EMS for treatment, and no charges were found to be warranted.

COOPER

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the best possible case. ... But a lot of that takes time.”

He also spoke about the lead detective in the case, Tama County Investigator Trevor Killian.

“Trevor Killian the last couple years has been laser-focused in his capacity as our investigator. ... I can’t even put into words how much time and effort goes into [such an investigation] that nobody sees. ... All the credit goes to Trevor for really investing himself an investing time into this case and making sure that every aspect of it was tight. ... And, obviously, in concert with DCI [Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation], and the AG’s office in preparation, [but] there wasn’t anybody that knew the case better than Trevor.”

To end his comments, Sheriff Schmidt spoke about Ryan Cooper, his legacy, and the greater Traer community.

“It’s clear that the legacy of Ryan has touched so many people – and Ryan’s life touched so many people. And in this day and age, we focus so much on the defendant and their rights, I feel like a lot of times ... we forget about empowering victims.

“Ultimately, I have a lot of faith [that] the Traer community will be there when needed. It’s humbling to have a community like Tama County that I know will step up when needed. It’s the truth. I love the Cooper family. ... You get close with victims’ families, especially when it’s a higher-profile case. I think Heather and Michelle said it best in their statements [on Friday]. ... Sometimes, justice can take time. And I don’t want people to lose faith that justice because it takes time, (it) doesn’t mean that justice won’t be rendered or won’t be served.

“Specifically, in the Cooper case, justice was served and the right people were held accountable.”

IN THE MATTER OF THE TRUST:

BELVA J. BARTHELMES,

Deceased.
TRUST NOTICE

IN THE IOWA DISTRICT COURT IN AND FOR TAMA COUNTY

To all persons regarding Belva J. Barthelmes, deceased, who died on or about the 11th day of July, 2025. You are hereby notified that Ronald J. Barthelmes is the Successor Trustee of the Belva J. Barthelmes Revocable Trust U/A Dated April 22, 2022. At this time, no probate administration is contemplated with regard to the above-referenced decedent’s estate. Any action to contest the validity of the trust must be brought in the District Court of Tama County, Iowa, within the later to occur of one hundred twenty (120) days from the date of second publication of this notice or thirty (30) days from the date of mailing this notice to all heirs of the decedent, spouse of the decedent and beneficiaries under the trust whose identities are reasonably ascertainable, or thereafter be forever barred.

Notice is further given that all persons indebted to the decedent or the trust are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned trustee and creditors having claims against the trust must mail them to the trustee at the address listed below via certified mail, return receipt requested, and unless so mailed by the later to occur of one hundred twenty (120) days from the second publication of this notice or thirty (30) days from the date of mailing this notice (unless otherwise allowed or paid) a claim is thereafter forever barred.

Dated this 8th day of September, 2025.

Ronald J. Barthelmes,
Successor Trustee
3036 170th Street
Dysart, IA 52224

Brian C. Eddy,
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